

Courtly Reformation: Williamite Propaganda after the  
Glorious Revolution in England

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## Abstract

This thesis starts from the assumption that historians of political thought have not provided an adequate account of William III's propaganda in England. It argues that the case put by the English regime in the 1690s was not based upon constitutional discourse (a field which has received much attention), but upon a neglected rhetoric of "courtly reformation". This was a Protestant, near-millennial, and biblically-based language, which was promoted by a group of propagandists around Gilbert Burnet, and which presented the new King as the divine instrument of spiritual renewal. Its main tenets were that a debauching popery had been eroding God's true Church in England since 1660; that 1688 had been a providential deliverance from this threat; and that William must be supported as the godly magistrate who would lead the English in purging their sins.

In its first section, the thesis demonstrates that Orange propagandists abandoned constitutional arguments in the winter of 1688/9 [chapter 1]. Realising that such arguments would limit monarchical power, government spokesmen dropped them in favour of the rhetoric of reformation, which was more favourable to the court [chapter 2]. Over the next years, they promoted this language through a variety of initiatives, including hitherto unstudied programmes of public fasting and publication of court sermons [chapter 3].

In its second section, the thesis demonstrates how courtly reformation addressed three problems facing the 1690s regime. First, the rhetoric countered criticism that William governed in Holland's interests by reminding his subjects that spiritual renewal must include support for godly Protestants abroad [chapter 4]. Next, the language helped to contain damaging party disputes. It avoided constitutional issues which divided Whigs and Tories, and calmed religious tensions by reassuring both non-conformists and Anglicans that they were vital to William's purging mission [chapter 5]. Finally, the propaganda defused "country" suspicions of the regime by insisting that a reforming King would work for administrative honesty and efficiency [chapter 6].

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## Notes on style

Dates are given old style, except where indicated, but the year has been assumed to start on the 1st January.

Spelling and capitalisation of seventeenth-century material has been standardised, except in pamphlet titles and block quotations.

The titles of some works have, of necessity, been shortened.

## SECTION ONE

## Introduction

William III, Propaganda and Historians

Most governments feel a need to advertise themselves to their populations. The regime of William III, King of England at the end of the seventeenth century, must have felt this need more than most. From his accession in 1689 to his death in 1702, William was faced with an extraordinary challenge to his authority, and an unprecedented dependence on the good will of his subjects. Having to deal with a pretender to his throne, to whip up his nation for war, and to govern through a body of independent politicians, William's requirement for an efficient and cogent propaganda was peculiar amongst early modern monarchs.

The King's difficulties started from the circumstances of his accession. Since William had not inherited the throne in 1688, but had gained it after forcibly invading the country, he could not make the usual English claim to monarchical legitimacy. Since the previous King had not died, but had fled in terror, he was denied an appeal to hereditary right. Worse still, the displaced monarch, James II, had not renounced his throne, but had gone to France to set up an alternative court there. He was thus to remain a claimant to William's position, and formed a rival focus of loyalty for those disgusted or frustrated by the new regime.<sup>1</sup> Throughout the 1690s, James' supporters constantly harassed his successor. They not only plotted against the new King's life, and invited French forces to invade his realm, but also ran a vigorous press which savaged William's government.<sup>2</sup> Despite official action against

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<sup>1</sup> For James' career after 1688 see John Miller, James II: a study in kingship, (London, 1989), pp.220-243.

<sup>2</sup> For the series of plots and invasion scares leading to the threatening conspiracy of 1696, see Jane Garrett, The triumphs of providence: the assassination plot, 1696, (Cambridge, 1980). For a detailed study of one Jacobite military attempt, see Philip Aubrey, The defeat of James Stuart's armada, 1692, (Leicester, 1979). For the disruption caused by Jacobite activity, see Paul Hopkins, "Sham plots and real plots in the 1690s", in E.Cruickshanks ed., Ideology and conspiracy: aspects of Jacobitism 1689-1759, (Edinburgh, 1982), pp.98-110. For the Jacobite press see Paul Monod, Jacobitism and the English people, 1688-1788, (Cambridge, 1989), pp.121-2.

them, Jacobite writers such as Charlwood Lawton, William Anderton and James Montgomery criticised the new regime in some of the most influential polemic of the decade.<sup>3</sup> It is not clear how successful such activities were in promoting James' cause, and little light has been shed on this question in the recent historiographic storms over

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<sup>3</sup> Perhaps their greatest coup was Lawton's pamphlet A short state of our condition with relation to the present Parliament, (London, 1693), which caused an outcry with its accusation that ministers were bribing members of the Commons. For the currency and impact of this tract see John Oldmixon, The history of England during the reigns of King William, Queen Mary, George I, (London, 1735), pp.89-90; R.A.Downie, Robert Harley and the press: propaganda and public opinion in the age of Swift and Defoe, (Cambridge, 1979), p.26.

Other Jacobite writers slid their material past William's censors by disguising it as historical or artistic work. Discussions of usurpations in England's medieval past were popular with Jacobites, as they allowed discussion of contemporary issues dressed in historical garb. See for example [George Hickes], A vindication of some among our selves against the principles of Dr Sherlock, (London, 1692), p.17-18, which discussed the depositions of Edward II and Richard II. John Dryden, James II's Poet Laureate, fed subtle political commentary into his translations of classical authors. The dedication his Aeneas sailed close to the wind in a discussion of Roman history which described Octavious Caesar subverting an old form of government "in effect by force of arms, but seemingly by the consent of the Roman people", H.T.Swedenberg ed., The works of John Dryden, 20 vols (Los Angeles, 1969), vol.5, p.278. Dryden's plays in the 1690s were also dominated by the politically sensitive themes of treachery and usurpation. See John Dryden, Don Sebastian, King of Portugal: a tragedy as acted at the Theatre Royal, (London, 1690); John Dryden, Cleomenes, the Spartan hero: a tragedy as it is acted at the Theatre Royal, (London, 1692).



Jacobitism.<sup>4</sup> What is obvious, however, is that William desperately needed to develop a propaganda to counter his rival's case. With the hereditary argument unavailable, he had to deal with an usually direct and pressing threat to his very right to rule.

William had a second need for good publicity, stemming from the international situation. He had invaded England as part of a geo-political strategy, designed to secure his European position against Louis XIV's France. As Stadholder of the United Provinces - a state threatened by French pressure in Flanders - William had a political duty to try to protect the Dutch. As landlord of extensive estates in the path of Louis' armies, and as sovereign of Orange, a principality annexed by Louis in 1681; William had personal reasons to check the French King.<sup>5</sup> In the mid-1680s, William feared that his chief defence against France - the balance of power in Europe - would be upset if James joined his enemy's camp. The English expedition, financed and manned by the francophobic Dutch, was designed to prevent this

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<sup>4</sup> Much debate over Jacobitism has centred on how many Englishmen adhered to James' cause after 1689. A passionate case for the importance of Jacobitism has been put in the introductions to Cruickshanks ed., Ideology and conspiracy, and Eveline Cruickshanks and Jeremy Black eds, The Jacobite challenge, (Edinburgh, 1988). See also Jonathan Clark, "On moving the middle ground: the significance of Jacobitism in historical studies", in Cruickshanks and Black, Jacobite challenge, pp.177-188. An opposing view, at least for the period after 1714, has been put by Linda Colley's In defiance of oligarchy: the Tory party 1714-60, (Cambridge, 1982), which argues against Cruickshanks' suggestion that many Tories were Jacobites. Nicholas Rogers has also warned against using expressions of Jacobite sentiment as evidence of support for James, since Jacobitism became something of an opposition idiom, used to express grievance, which did not necessarily imply advocacy of actual Stuart restoration. See Nicholas Rogers, "Riot and popular Jacobitism in early Hanoverian England", in Cruickshanks, Ideology and conspiracy, pp.70-88, especially pp.81-5; "Popular protest in early Hanoverian London, Past and Present, 79 (1978), pp.70-100, especially pp.96-9. Paul Monod perhaps takes the most sensible line, suggesting that arguments over the popularity of Jacobitism cannot be settled, since historians use such widely different definitions of the phenomenon. See Monod, Jacobitism, p.4.

<sup>5</sup> For a brief introduction to the general rivalry between France and Holland in the seventeenth century, see Thomas Munck, Seventeenth century Europe: state, conflict and the social order in Europe, 1598-1700, (Basingstoke, 1990), pp.372-7. William had come to power in Holland in 1672, at the head of the anti-French interest, see Stephen B.Baxter, William III, (London, 1966); Pieter Geyl, The Netherlands in the seventeenth century, Part II, 1678-1715, (London, 1961), pp.121-146; Herbert H.Rowen, John de Witt, Grand Pensionary of Holland, 1625-1672, (Princeton, 1978), pp.798-883.

disastrous possibility, and to bring England into war with Louis on the Provinces' side.<sup>6</sup> William succeeded in this bellicose aim only weeks after being crowned, but his success demanded huge sacrifices from the English, which in turn required an effective war propaganda. By the mid decade, well into the longest foreign war England had fought for many decades, the country had been disrupted by conflict as almost never before. Nearly one per cent of her entire population had been sent in arms to Flanders.<sup>7</sup> Supplying such a large military force had meant heavy taxation and a huge drain of coin from the country which had stimulated an acute monetary crisis. England's mercantile economy had also been damaged as trade with France was banned, and merchant ships were commandeered for the naval war.<sup>8</sup> Even when William made peace with Louis at Ryswick in 1697, the strain was not over. Although the King sought to avoid future conflict by negotiation, he still asked that England keep a large standing army in readiness for potential troubles. His request proved wise, for by 1701 Louis' ambitions on Spain had plunged England and France back into a war which would last over twelve years.<sup>9</sup> Keeping the English political nation behind such a disruptive and wearying campaign would always be a major test of the regime's ideological skills.

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<sup>6</sup> For the European background to William's invasion see Jonathan Israel, "The Dutch role in the Glorious Revolution", in Jonathan Israel ed., The Anglo-Dutch moment: essays on the Glorious Revolution and its world impact, (Cambridge, 1991), pp.105-162; John Carswell, The descent on England: a study of the English Revolution of 1688 and its European background, (London, 1969); John Stoye, "Europe and the Revolution of 1688", in Robert Beddard ed., The Revolutions of 1688, (Oxford, 1991), pp.191-212; and the essays in Ragnhild Hatton and J.S.Bromley eds, William III and Louis XIV, (Liverpool, 1968).

<sup>7</sup> D.W.Jones, War and economy in the age of William III and Marlborough, (Oxford, 1988), p.9, reports that around 48,000 English troops were in Holland at this time. E.A.Wrigley and R.S.Schofield, The population history of England, 1541-1871: a reconstruction, (Cambridge, 1981), estimates a total English population of about 4.9 million at this time.

<sup>8</sup> For the level of mobilisation and general economic strain see Jones, War and economy. More specifically for the unprecedented leap in taxes see Patrick O'Brien, "The political economy of British taxation, 1660-1815", Economic History Review, 2nd series 41 (1988), pp.1-32.

<sup>9</sup> One of the most straightforward accounts of these events is still David Ogg, England in the reigns of James II and William III, (Oxford, 1955), pp.440-485.



William had a third reason for developing good propaganda, closely linked to his second. Constant conflict meant constant demands by the crown for money. Chronic fiscal need involved repeated sessions of Parliament, the only body which could grant the executive tax revenue. As a result, Parliament was to become an indispensable part of the English administrative system. Since 1689 it has met every winter for a substantive session.<sup>10</sup> William was thus the first English monarch whose essential task was the management of an independent legislature. At least annually, he had to present his case to the Lords, and the purse-carrying Commons, and win their support. He therefore faced, not only a general population to be won over to his cause, but a primary audience of parliamentarians, who had to be swayed and convinced on an almost daily basis.<sup>11</sup> This permanent public jury on his record and policy created an unprecedented need for effective public relations.

Given all this, it is surprising how little study has been made of William's propaganda. This is especially true when so much excellent work has been done raking over the ideological history of the 1690s. Scholars of the decade have recognised it as a period of rapid ideological development, when far-reaching political change affected the construction and presentation of political argument. Historians have recognised that the context and content of debates were transformed by the shock of the 1688/9 Revolution; the wartime expansion of the state's fiscal and administrative machinery; and the new permeance of Parliament

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<sup>10</sup> For an analysis of the longterm consequences of this, see Paul Langford, Public life and the propertied Englishman, 1689-1796, (Oxford, 1991), chapter 3.

<sup>11</sup> Several historians have pointed out that William's wars effected a fundamental shift in the balance of power between executive and legislature. See Angus McInnes, "When was the English Revolution?", History, 67 (1982), pp.377-92; Jennifer Carter, "The Revolution and the constitution" in Geoffrey Holmes ed., Britain after the Glorious Revolution (London, 1979), pp.39-58; Clayton Roberts "The constitutional significance of the financial settlement of 1690", Historical Journal, 20 (1977), pp.59-76.



as a power-base.<sup>12</sup> Yet the words of the court which prompted these changes have been largely ignored.

There are perhaps four main reasons why the Williamite case has received so little attention. First, the historiography of late Stuart England has been dominated by the assumption that the experience of the English Civil War demoted religion as an issue in politics. Over the past two decades, the traditional view that the late seventeenth century was a period of steady secularisation, has been refined by historians such as Christopher Hill. In the writings of Hill and others, the divisive conflicts of faith in the mid century have been held to have encouraged a defensive mentality, in which dangerous theological questions were played down. After 1660, fears of the past were believed to have silenced a biblically-based language of politics, which used scriptural texts to create a radical sense of Protestant mission; and to have replaced it with an emphasis on moderation and reason.<sup>13</sup> Consequently, theological argument has not been a high priority for historians of political thought in the 1690s. Although recent years have seen challenges to the secularising hypothesis amongst students of the Restoration, this historiographic wave has not fully broken into all

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<sup>12</sup> A good guide to much of this literature, at least that published before 1987, can be found in the new introduction to Geoffrey Holmes, British politics in the age of Anne, revised edition (London, 1967), especially pp.xxix-lxii. Since Holmes wrote, John Brewer, The sinews of power: war, money and the English state, (London, 1989), has underlined the importance of the 1690s in the growth of the state (pp.135-162, 219-249) and has charted the way this, and the permanence of Parliament, altered the structure of political discussion.

<sup>13</sup> Hill's position is put most clearly in Christopher Hill, Some intellectual consequences of the English Revolution, (London, 1980). The shifts he perceived are broadly supported in William Lamont's early work. See William M.Lamont, Godly rule: politics and religion 1603-59, (London, 1969). Most political historians of the Restoration have also demoted religion as an object of study. For a summary of their agenda, see J.R.Jones, "Introduction: main trends in Restoration England", in J.R.Jones ed., The restored monarchy, 1660-1688, (London, 1979), pp.1-29 - pp.7-8 talks specifically about the decline in religion as a topic of dispute. A recent work which remains in this historiographic mode is David Underdown, Fire from heaven: the life of an English town in the seventeenth century, (London, 1992).

areas of study, and there remains much to be done uncovering the spiritual dimension of the late Stuart period.<sup>14</sup>

As a result of this scholarly neglect of religion, Williamite rhetoric has been passed over. This is because the royal case after the Revolution was built around a set of explicitly Protestant and biblical principles. As will be demonstrated, court publicity centred on what have been seen as outdated religious notions, and was promoted by supposedly superseded means such as prayers, sermons and fast days.<sup>15</sup> Thus, whilst the issues and arguments of the 1690s were assumed to be largely secular, the full story of Williamite propaganda could not emerge.

The second historiographic impediment to understanding court ideology in the 1690s has been the drive to assess the constitutional significance of the Revolution. From the moment William invaded, Englishmen have asked themselves what James' displacement implied about the fundamental rules of English government. Debates as early as the winter of 1688/9 rehearsed one central question. In a few weeks of frenzied discussion, press and politicians argued whether the acceptance of William would be a radical or conservative act. For a critical moment, the political nation pondered whether the exclusion of James from power could be achieved without redefining the English polity. It asked itself if a settlement would have to include an explicit

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<sup>14</sup> Tim Harris' introduction to Mark Goldie, Tim Harris, Paul Seaward eds, The politics of religion in Restoration England, (Oxford, 1990), argues for the persistence of pre-Civil War politico-religious disputes into Charles II's reign, and the essays in that volume bear out this contention. Michael Finlayson, Historians, puritanism and the English Revolution: the religious factor in English politics before and after the Interregnum, (Toronto, 1983), sees a essentially similar mindset dictating political developments both before and after the Cromwellian interregnum. Jonathan Scott, Algernon Sidney and the Restoration crisis, 1677 - 1683, (Cambridge, 1991), sees three essentially similar crises of popery in England, spanning the mid-century wars - 1638-42, 1678-83, 1687-9. Gary S.de Krey, A fractured society: the politics of London in the first age of party, (Oxford, 1985) and Craig Rose, "Politics, religion and charity in Augustan London", (Cambridge PhD, 1988) both see traditional religious divisions dominating the politics of the City of London, and local philanthropic effort in the late Stuart era. Mark Goldie, "John Locke and Anglican royalism", Political studies, 31 (1983), pp.61-85, charts central religious issues in Restoration politics.

<sup>15</sup> See below chapters 2 and 3.



acknowledgement that kingship was conditional. How should the restraining power of Parliament be enshrined? Did there have to be any implication of elective monarchy, or of a contract between rulers and ruled?<sup>16</sup> Since 1689, these questions have proved perennially fascinating. Under William, and in the eighteenth century, they were to be of intense political significance. Interpretation of what precisely had happened at the Revolution became a partisan issue which helped divide the nation into hostile camps.<sup>17</sup> Later, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the debates assumed great historical interest. Because they were seen as central to late Stuart politics, and because they have left copious material in the form of printed polemic; constitutional perceptions of the Revolution have been used as the key to understanding the period. The arguments over 1688 have been utilised to provide insight into the minds of Augustan Englishmen, and to explain tensions within English society. A great deal of study has gone into dissecting the debates of 1689, tracing the history of the concepts used, explaining the disagreements which emerged, and accounting for the ambiguities in the settlement reached.<sup>18</sup> The obsession has been so great

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<sup>16</sup> For the history of these discussions see the works cited in note 18 of this Introduction.

<sup>17</sup> For the divisiveness of interpretations of the Revolution in William's reign, see below, chapter 5, section I. For a longer view see Paul Langford, A polite and commercial people: England 1727-1783, (Oxford, 1989), pp.679-683

Perhaps the most dramatic explosions of constitutional argument came at the time of Sacheverell's trial in 1710, see Geoffrey Holmes, The trial of Dr. Sacheverell, (London, 1982).

<sup>18</sup> See Eveline Cruickshanks, J.Ferris and David Hayton, "The House of Commons vote on the transfer of the crown, 5th February 1689", Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, 52 (1979), pp.37-47; Eveline Cruickshanks, David Hayton and Colin Jones, "Divisions in the House of Lords on the transfer of the crown", Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, 53 (1980), pp.56-87; Henry Horwitz, "Parliament and the Glorious Revolution", Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, 47 (1974), pp.36-52; D.L.Jones, A parliamentary history of the Glorious Revolution, (London, 1988); Henry Horwitz, "1689 (and all that)", Parliamentary History, 6 (1978), pp.23-32; Robert J.Frankle, "The formulation of the Declaration of Rights", Historical Journal, 17 (1974), pp.265-79; H.Nenner, "Constitutional uncertainty and the Declaration of Rights", in B.Malament ed., After the Reformation: essays in honour of J.H.Hexter (Manchester, 1980), pp.291-308; Lois G.Schworer, The Declaration of Rights, 1689, (Baltimore, 1981); T.P.Slaughter, "'Abdicate' and 'contract' in the Glorious Revolution", Historical Journal, 24 (1981), pp.323-37. John Miller, "The Glorious Revolution: 'contract' and 'abdicate' reconsidered", Historical Journal,

that Lois Schwoerer, introducing a recent collection of essays, was able to summarise the most modern historiography as if the central question had not changed in over three hundred years. Scholars, like the men of 1689, were depicted still discussing whether the Revolution should be seen as constitutional innovation or continuity.<sup>19</sup>

All this study has unearthed much important detail about the mentality of late Stuart Englishmen. However, it has not led to study of royal propaganda. This is because William's court participated little in the debates which have been found so fascinating. As will be demonstrated, the royal case was not constructed around constitutional theory. After an initial attempt to justify William's rule on constitutional grounds, the court soon discovered that the issues raised by discussing England's fundamental law were extremely controversial, and hindered the King's attempt to unite the nation behind his war effort. In response, the court attempted to dampen discussion of the legal basis of the Revolution, a policy which has led historians to ignore its polemic.<sup>20</sup>

The third historiographic agendum to distract attention from William's court has been interest in the development of party. One of the most remarkable features of England between 1670 and Queen Anne's reign, was the emergence of Whigs and Tories as national political alignments. There had previously been factions and temporary alliances between politicians, but these had not come to dominate politics as the parties of the late Stuart period did. Although Whigs and Tories at the end of the seventeenth century lacked centralised organisation and official leadership, and although their discipline was not always tight, they did exhibit features which pointed forward to later partisan

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25 (1982), pp.541-55. Corinne Comstock Weston and Janelle Renfrew Greenburg, Subjects and sovereigns: the grand controversy over legal sovereignty in Stuart England, (Cambridge, 1981), especially chapter 8, and appendix.

<sup>19</sup> Lois G. Schwoerer ed., The Revolution of 1688/9: changing perspectives (Cambridge, 1991), introduction, especially pp.4-15. A "radical or conservative?" approach has also been adopted in W.A. Speck, Reluctant revolutionaries: Englishmen and the Revolution of 1688, (Oxford, 1988), chapter 7.

<sup>20</sup> See below, chapter 5, section III.



organisations. Party names were recognised as usefully descriptive labels for individuals' positions: members of the groups exhibited a certain cohesion in Parliament: and the division between the two camps filtered most contemporary issues through its bifocating lens.<sup>21</sup>

Naturally there has been considerable historiographic interest in this novel way of organising politics. Comment began in the late Stuart period itself, when the press chewed over the rights and wrongs of dividing Englishmen into warring political armies.<sup>22</sup> Building on this long pedigree, historians have shown a particular fascination with the topic in the last three decades. In the late 1960s they were stirred by a challenge from Robert Walcott. In a book published in 1956 Walcott had tried to play down the importance of party division by analyzing Augustan politics as a series of kaleidoscopic manoeuvrings by aristocratic factions.<sup>23</sup> Ten years later, his interpretation stimulated a counter attack by J.H.Plumb, Geoffrey Holmes, Henry Horwitz, and W.A.Speck, who used division lists, local studies, and much other material to re-paint an England fractured on Whig/Tory lines.<sup>24</sup> This re-confirmation of party in political history has buttressed interest amongst students of political thought. In a succession of works, intellectual historians have tried to get at the ideological roots of

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<sup>21</sup> Still one of the best accounts of the processes which led to party consolidation is Keith Feiling, A history of the Tory party, 1640-1714, (Oxford, 1924). For the development of parties after the Revolution, see B.W.Hill, The growth of parliamentary parties, 1689-1742, (London, 1976). For the latest account see Tim Harris, Politics under the later Stuarts: party conflict in a divided society, (Harlow, 1983).

<sup>22</sup> One of the most sustained early treatments of this theme was [John Toland], The art of governing by parties: particularly in religion, in politics, in parliament, (London, 1701). This formed part of a huge literature commenting on the emergence of parties, especially the Whigs, as self interested groups. Some of this material is analyzed below, chapter 6, section VI.

<sup>23</sup> Robert Walcott, English politics in the early eighteenth century, (Oxford, 1956).

<sup>24</sup> J.H.Plumb, The growth of political stability in England, 1675-1725, (London, 1967); Holmes, British politics - the first edition of this was published in the same year as Plumb's volume; Henry Horwitz, "The structure of parliamentary politics", in Holmes, Britain ... Glorious Revolution, pp.96-115; W.A.Speck, Tory and Whig: the struggle in the constituencies, 1701-1715, (London, 1970).

the division which dominated late seventeenth-century England. Two key works in this field appeared in 1977. Between them, Mark Goldie's Cambridge thesis, and J.P.Kenyon's Oxford lectures, demonstrated the flexibility and complexity of Whig and Tory philosophies under William.<sup>25</sup> Other studies have concentrated on the influences which may have contributed to the formation of party attitudes. On the Tory side there has been a new emphasis on Anglican politics as the basis of the party's stance, and a new recognition of the role of Jacobites in informing party belief.<sup>26</sup> On the Whig side, there has been a general reassessment of John Locke's place in the party's canon, and much work on the various strands, especially the radical strands, of Whiggery which competed under William.<sup>27</sup>

As with the constitutional historiography, party studies have provided penetrating insights into late Stuart thought, without revealing much about the court. The reason for the lacuna is similar. William did not participate in party debate, and so did not provide evidence for the formation of party ideology. Hoping to gain general support for his policies, William's propagandists were careful not to associate the King too closely with either Whigs or Tories and so avoided using any arguments which might be identified as partisan.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> J.P.Kenyon, Revolution principles: the politics of party 1689-1720, (Cambridge, 1977); Mark Goldie, "Tory political thought, 1689-1714", (Cambridge PhD, 1977).

<sup>26</sup> See for example, John Miller, "Proto-Jacobitism? The Tories and the Revolution of 1688-9", in Cruickshanks and Black, Jacobite challenge, pp.7-23; Gerald Straka, Anglican reactions to the Revolution of 1688, (Madison, Wisconsin, 1962); Mark Goldie, "The non-jurors, episcopacy, and the origins of the Convocation controversy", in Cruickshanks, Ideology and conspiracy, pp.15-35.

<sup>27</sup> See particularly Kenyon, Revolution principles; Richard Ashcraft, Revolutionary politics and Locke's "Two treatises of government", (Princeton, 1986); Richard Ashcraft and M.M.Goldsmith, "John Locke, revolution principles and the formation of Whig ideology", Historical Journal, 26 (1983), pp.773-800. Martyn P.Thompson, "The reception of Locke's Two treatises of government, 1690-1705", Political Studies, 24 (1976), pp.184-191; Mark Goldie, "The roots of true Whiggism, 1688-94", History of Political Thought, 1 (1980), pp.195-236; Gary S.de Krey, "Revolution redivivus: 1688-9 and the radical tradition in seventeenth-century London politics", in Schwoerer, The Revolution of 1688-9, pp.198-217.

<sup>28</sup> See below, chapter 5.



The effects of the three historiographic agenda so far mentioned have been compounded by changes in methodology amongst students of political thought. To understand how the shifting state of the art helped to distract attention away from William's propaganda, it is necessary to outline the new techniques of analysis and show how they have been applied to the late Stuart period. Since the late 1950s, a number of writers, notably Quentin Skinner and J.G.A.Pocock, have altered priorities amongst historians of political ideas. They have rejected the traditional exegesis of a small number of canonical texts, in favour of a broader conception of their discipline, which concentrates on the idioms, or "languages", in which political argument is couched. At the core of their new approach was the assumption that past speech and writing were conditioned by contemporary linguistic conventions. Oratorical performances were held to have been shaped by widely-shared languages, which exercised a paradigmatic power - setting rules for describing the world, and assigning values to objects, relationships and actions within it. Skinner and Pocock maintained that it was hard for any writer to break free of such idioms, because they shaped his own understanding of the universe, and provided points of reference which made communication with others possible. Adopting these assumptions had two important consequences. First, "languages" became a prime object of investigation. Students of political thought were enjoined to move outside the canon, and read a great number of "minor" texts, in which the contemporary idioms of language could be established. Second, past writers came to be considered less as original minds, constructing political ideas out of their own first principles, than as actors having to operate within a complex web of social discourse. Those attempting to achieve a polemical goal were recognised as appealing to, and manipulating, the available languages to make their point.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> The new directions in the history of political thought are discussed in James Tully ed., Meaning and context: Quentin Skinner and his critics, (Cambridge, 1988) - this prints many of Skinner's theoretical articles, together with glosses, and replies by other writers. See also, J.G.A.Pocock, "Languages and their implications: the transformation of the study of political thought", in his Politics, language and time: essays on political thought and history, (London, 1971), pp.104-148; J.G.A.Pocock, Virtue, commerce and history: essays on political thought and history, chiefly in the eighteenth century,

Of itself, this new approach did not direct attention away from Williamite rhetoric. Indeed, the description of royal propaganda offered below will owe much to Skinner and Pocock's assumptions. It will use "minor" (that is to say, under-studied) texts to demonstrate how a series of existing political conventions were assembled and adapted to form a case for William's rule and policy.<sup>30</sup> However, although the new methodology is helpful for the study of court polemic, the way one of its leading practitioners has applied it to the 1690s has not been. In a number of influential works, J.G.A. Pocock has tended to pass over the full range of political language used under William to concentrate on a single set of idioms. He has isolated a group of "civic humanist" discourses, used by late Stuart Englishmen to discuss contemporary problems. Pocock has told a fascinating story about the adoption of Renaissance notions of political virtue, corruption, and fortune: but the very interest of his tale has directed attention away from William. This is because the "civic humanist" languages Pocock was so keen to promote were used mainly by anti-court writers. As a result, men from outside William's ambit - writers such as Charles Davenant, Robert Molesworth and John Trenchard - have stepped into the limelight, whilst the King's polemicists have continued to be ignored.<sup>31</sup>

As a result of these such historiographic agenda, relevant work on royal propaganda in the 1690s has been slim indeed. Study has been more or less limited to one small area of the regime's self-presentation - the creation of personal images of William and his Queen, Mary.<sup>32</sup> The

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(Cambridge, 1985), pp.1-36.

<sup>30</sup> See especially chapter 2, section 1.

<sup>31</sup> For Pocock's work on civic humanists see his The Machiavellian moment: Florentine political thought and the Atlantic republican tradition, (Princeton, 1975), especially pp.424-460; "Machiavelli, Harrington and English political ideologies in the eighteenth century", in his Politics, language and time, pp.80-104; "The varieties of Whiggism from Exclusion to Reform", in his Virtue, commerce and history, pp.215-310. It is noticeable that all these works concentrate on the late 1690s, when Pocock's subjects were most active. They all pass very quickly over the early decade, when William had to work hardest to establish his case.

<sup>32</sup> See W.A. Speck, "William - and Mary?", and Stephen B. Baxter, "William III as Hercules: the political implications of court culture", both in Schwoerer, The Revolution of 1688/9, pp.131-146, 95-106. Lois

arguments of some government ministers have been studied, but not as court rhetoric. Rather they have been examined as contributions to the ideologies of the Whigs and Tories who competed for office in the 1690s.<sup>33</sup> Mark Goldie has provided some insight into campaigns by the court to promote particular accounts of William's title to the throne, but this was only one part of the regime's effort.<sup>34</sup> There has also been intense interest in a brief period of Williamite propaganda in the winter of 1688/9.<sup>35</sup> Yet for reasons discussed below, the publicity campaign conducted during William's invasion was something of a one-off, and gave a misleading impression of royal argument throughout the reign as a whole. Scholars of the period are thus still without a clear sense of the public ideology of one of the most innovative governments ever to rule England.

It will be the main task of this thesis to begin to supply this deficiency. The basic suggestion in the chapters which follow is that the 1690s regime relied upon a rhetoric of "courtly reformation" to sell itself to its people. Concentrating on a rather different range of sources from those generally used by historians of political thought (the literature of public worship will often take the place of tracts and pamphlets), the work will argue that the Orange monarchy developed a providential, and aggressively Protestant, language to put its case to the English nation. Throughout his reign, William's allies presented their hero as the harbinger of an almost millennial period of moral and religious renewal, whose displacement of James II, and battles with

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G.Schwoerer, "Images of Queen Mary II, 1689-95", Renaissance Quarterly, 42 (1989), pp.717-748.

<sup>33</sup> For example, Kenyon, Revolution principles, discusses the views and propaganda activities of John Somers, the Lord Chancellor from 1697-1700 (pp.42-4) and the Earl of Rochester, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 1700-1, (pp.81-2) - but the former is seen as a contributor to Whig thought, the latter to Tory.

<sup>34</sup> Mark Goldie, "The Revolution of 1689 and the structure of political argument: an essay and an annotated bibliography of pamphlets in the allegiance controversy", Bulletin of Research in the Humanities, 83 (1980), pp.473-564.

<sup>35</sup> See chapter 1, section I.



Louis XIV, were integral to a divine plan for world history.<sup>36</sup> Certain elements of this discourse have already been noted by scholars working on the borders of political thought and propaganda. In particular, those concerned with the movement for the reformation of manners in the 1690s, and those working on "latitudinarian" philosophy in the late seventeenth century, have noted a peculiar zeal against vice in the 1690s, and have commented that some of the notions circulating amongst certain clerics were highly supportive of the Revolution.<sup>37</sup> However, these scholars only went some of the way to place their work in the context of Williamite publicity. Whilst recognising part of the political importance of the phenomena they studied, they have failed to describe them as elements of an efficiently-organised and officially-sanctioned propaganda campaign. It is only when this work is done, and is supplemented by close study of the court's machinery for public relations, that the vital role of some of the ideas that have been uncovered can be appreciated. Detailed exploration of "courtly reformation" rescues the post-revolutionary regime from ideological silence, and casts much-needed light on the political and intellectual history of a crucially important period.

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<sup>36</sup> For a brief summary of the main points of "courtly reformation" see chapter 2, section I.

<sup>37</sup> The three works which come closest to rendering this thesis redundant are Dudley W.R.Bahlmann, The moral revolution of 1688, (Yale, 1957); Straka, Anglican reactions; and Margaret C.Jacob, The Newtonians and the English Revolution, 1689-1720, (Hassocks, Sussex, 1976). This last book has been heavily criticised for its argument about the political implications of Newtonian science, and has a very strange view of its subjects' social beliefs - but its conclusions about the reactions of certain Anglicans to 1688 are still valuable.

## Chapter One

The Prince of Orange's "Declaration" and  
Williamite Propaganda

## 1

When William, Prince of Orange, landed at Brixham, Devon, on 5th November, 1688, his propagandists had already been busy. A month earlier, on the 10th October (new style), the Orange camp at the Hague had issued a manifesto: William's Declaration of the reasons inducing him to appear in armes in England.<sup>1</sup> Written by Gaspar Fagel, the Grand Pensionary of Holland, who was a close ally of the Prince, this offered a detailed justification for the military expedition.<sup>2</sup>

The Declaration took its stand on English constitution. It asserted that William's actions offered the only chance to defeat a conspiracy which, in recent years, had aimed to replace England's free and legal government with an absolutist regime.<sup>3</sup> The first section of the document tried to prove the existence of such a tyrannous plot. It cited a series of high-handed executive actions, which suggested that evil men at court were bent on imposing "arbitrary" rule.<sup>4</sup> Amongst other worrying developments the manifesto analyzed James' notorious suspensions of statute; his "illegal" establishment of an Ecclesiastical Commission; his interference with the judiciary; and finally, his attempt to subvert the succession in the dubious claim that he had fathered a male heir.<sup>5</sup> Having demonstrated the threat from evil conspirators, the Declaration went on to consider possible remedies against them. It acknowledged that the proper safeguard against

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<sup>1</sup> William III, The declaration of His Highness William Henry, Prince of Orange, of the reasons inducing him to appear in armes in the kingdom of England, (Hague, 1688). It can be consulted in William Cobbett ed., The parliamentary history of England, 36 vols (London, 1806-20), vol.5, cols. 1-11.

<sup>2</sup> For Fagel's authorship see, Gilbert Burnet, The history of his own times, 6 vols 2nd ed., (Oxford, 1833), vol.3, p.300.

<sup>3</sup> Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, col.1.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. cols 1-2.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. cols 2-7, 9.

ambitious government in England was the calling of Parliament; but it suggested that creeping tyranny in the past few years had cut off this "last and great remedy".<sup>6</sup> The wicked courtiers had prevented the legislature assembling, and had tried to interfere with the free election of the country's representatives.<sup>7</sup> In these circumstances, the Declaration argued, more unusual measures were needed. William - who had a legitimate interest in England as the husband of the heir to the throne (James' daughter Mary), and who had been asked to intervene by several English notables - had recognised the danger and had "thought fit to go over to England" to retrieve the situation.<sup>8</sup> His design was to ensure that a "free and lawful Parliament" might assemble, and that all the autocratic actions of the last few years might be referred to it.<sup>9</sup> The Declaration, therefore, dressed William's expedition as a necessary preservative of English rights and freedoms, which all honest and law-abiding subjects must support.<sup>10</sup>

William's Declaration is the essential starting point for any study of Orange propaganda in the 1690s. Not only did it provide a detailed and comprehensive legal case for the Prince's intervention in England, it has also received a great deal of historiographic attention. Particularly in recent years, two scholars have stressed the document's enormous impact, and its overwhelming ideological success in the winter of 1688/9. In the works of Lois Schwoerer and Jonathan Israel, the

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid. col.8.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. col.10

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. cols 9-10.

<sup>10</sup> Its appeal was perhaps best summarised in one of its concluding paragraphs - "We do in the last place, invite and require all persons whatsoever ... to come and assist us, in order to the executing of this our design ... so that we may prevent all those miseries which needs must follow upon the nation's being kept under arbitrary government and slavery, and that all the violences and disorders, which may have overturned the whole constitution of the English government, may be fully redressed, in a free and legal Parliament". Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, col.11.



Declaration has become essential to the events of 1688.<sup>11</sup> For them, the manifesto was vital in clearing William's path to the throne, because it allowed him to win the battle of ideas with James "hands down".<sup>12</sup>

Lois Schwoerer has tried to establish the importance of the Declaration by claiming that it saturated public opinion during William's invasion. Her case is based on the efficiency with which the document was distributed. She has described an impressive Orange publicity machine which ensured that the Prince's tract penetrated all levels of English society. Schwoerer has shown, for instance, that the Declaration was sent over the Channel in the autumn of 1688 with a number of agents who had been given instructions to broadcast it as soon as William landed. When these agents got news of the Prince's arrival, they handed the document out in large numbers, and sent copies, free of charge, to publishers and booksellers.<sup>13</sup> In addition, Schwoerer described other Orange productions which referred to the manifesto, and so helped to spread its argument more widely. A letter from William to the English army was published, citing the Declaration, and a similar epistle was sent to the fleet.<sup>14</sup> Consequently, Schwoerer argued, the manifesto was "everywhere" in 1688, bringing the Prince's message to "every person with the slightest interest in politics".<sup>15</sup> Jonathan Israel has echoed much of Schwoerer's work on the tract's distribution, and has analyzed the manifesto's role within the Williamite camp to re-enforce its ideological importance. He has pointed out that during

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<sup>11</sup> Lois G. Schwoerer, "Propaganda in the Revolution of 1688-9", American Historical Review, 82 (1977), pp.843-74; Schwoerer, The Declaration of Rights, 1689, (Baltimore, 1981), pp.105-120. Israel, Anglo-Dutch moment, pp.13-22.

<sup>12</sup> Israel, "Dutch role", p.124.

<sup>13</sup> Schwoerer, "Propaganda", pp.484-5. Lucile Pinkham, William III and the respectable Revolution, (London, 1954), pp.177-8, describes the arrest of Colonel Langham, one of the agents carrying the Declaration.

<sup>14</sup> Schwoerer, "Propaganda", p.855; Declaration of Rights, p.115-6. The letters to the forces were: William III, A Letter, &c. [to the English Army], [1688]; William III, The Prince of Orange's letter to the English fleet, and the form of prayer used in the Dutch fleet, (Amsterdam, 1688).

<sup>15</sup> Schwoerer, "Propaganda", p.854.; Declaration of Rights, p.105.

William's invasion the document was read out constantly, so that it became a badge of allegiance, ritually endorsed by those Englishmen who rallied to the Prince's cause. The garrison at Plymouth, for example, came over to William when

the Governor caused the Prince of Orange's Declaration to be read in his presence to the remaining officers of the regiment and to the officers of the citadel; to which when each man had given his concurrence, the Governor then ordered it to be read out at the head of the battalion to the private soldiers, to which in imitation of the officers they assented by throwing up of their hats and huzzas; upon which it was fastened publicly on the gates of the citadel.<sup>16</sup>

In other places, gentlemen signalled their support for the Orange cause by subscribing to a number of local declarations, which owed their phraseology, especially their concern about the advent of arbitrary power, to William's original statement.<sup>17</sup> In the light of such evidence, Israel has concurred with Schwoerer that the Declaration achieved a remarkable degree of intellectual hegemony in 1688/9. Indeed, he has gone so far as to state that

there is an important sense in which the distribution and reading of the Prince of Orange's Declaration was the very essence of the Glorious Revolution.<sup>18</sup>

Schwoerer and Israel's discoveries about William's manifesto are undoubtedly striking. However, it is well to be cautious before being carried away by their claims for the document. Whilst the two historians have demonstrated the crucial role of the Declaration within the Williamite campaign of 1688/9, there are reasons to doubt their

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<sup>16</sup> Historical Manuscripts Commission, Report on the manuscripts of the late Reginald Rawden Hastings, 4 vols, (London, 1930), vol.2, pp.198-9 - Theophilus, Seventh Earl of Huntingdon, to James II, Plymouth, 29th November.

<sup>17</sup> The earliest and most important of these was composed by Sir Edward Seymour to express the zeal of the Devon gentry, see, The general association, of the gentlemen of Devon, to His Highness, the Prince of Orange, (Exeter, 1988) See also - The copy of the association signed at Exeter by the Lords and gentlemen that went to the Prince of Orange, [1688]; The true copy of a paper delivered by the Lord De..... to the Mayor of Darby, where he quarter'd the one and twentieth of November, 1688, (London, 1688); The declaration of the nobility, gentry and commonality at the rendezvous at Nottingham, Nov. 22. 1688, ([London], 1689).

<sup>18</sup> Israel, Anglo-Dutch moment, p.15.

conclusions about its impact and effectiveness. The main cause of suspicion is that neither Israel, nor Schwoerer, was primarily interested in the study of propaganda. Rather, both approached the Declaration from that older field of historic inquiry - the assessment of the constitutional significance of the Revolution. Both concentrated upon the manifesto as part of arguments about the legal meaning of James' deposition. Schwoerer, for instance, argued that 1688 was a moment of constitutional innovation. Detecting radical doctrines within the Declaration, she stressed how successful the manifesto had been, because she believed it had popularised the idea of limited monarchy, and had therefore helped to restrict the prerogative in the Revolution settlement.<sup>19</sup> Israel, similarly, argued that contemporaries understood 1688 as a final confirmation that the English enjoyed rights against a tyrant. He emphasised the ideological hegemony of the Declaration, with its justification of armed resistance to government, as proof of this contention.<sup>20</sup> As contributions to constitutional studies, these conclusions are valuable. However, as an analysis of William's propaganda, they are distorted. Finding the manifesto such useful evidence for their constitutional cases, Schwoerer and Israel became over-committed to the document's devastating impact during William's first winter in England. Neither pointed out the considerable weaknesses in the manifesto's argument, or the speed with which the tract was abandoned by its authors. The fact is that, far from winning the intellectual battle, as Schwoerer and Israel contended, the Prince's Declaration botched the job. It failed to impose a dominant interpretation of William's expedition and rapidly became an embarrassment to those who had composed it.

## II

The Declaration's most obvious weakness was that it failed to silence its opponents. In the work of Schwoerer and Israel, the Jacobite response to the manifesto appears puny. Although recognising that James' supporters did attempt to counter Orange propaganda, the two historians

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<sup>19</sup> Schwoerer, Declaration of Rights, pp.236-2.

<sup>20</sup> Israel, Anglo-Dutch moment, pp.19-21.



have tended to present their actions as a hopeless rearguard defence, doomed to failure in the face of superior Williamite publicity.<sup>21</sup> In reality, the bout between the two camps was evenly matched. The Declaration had to contend with an able royal campaign, which exploited deep-laid fears of civil disturbance, and utilised the scope for alternative readings of England's unwritten and evolving constitution.<sup>22</sup>

The weapons of propaganda available to James were at least as impressive as those used by the Orange side. For the first five weeks of William's time in England, the old King still exercised the plenitude of royal authority: including control of the official press. Through the autumn of 1688, James made full use of this advantage, ordering his printers to produce a string of denunciations of William's conduct. A definitive counter-declaration appeared on the 6th November, and form of prayers was printed, which was to be used in every parish, to ask for God's help in defeating the Prince's invasion.<sup>23</sup> Perhaps most importantly, James exploited his influence over the London Gazette. This government periodical, which enjoyed a virtual monopoly of the newspaper market, became the centrepiece of the royal campaign to discredit William. After the landing at Torbay, James increased the Gazette's frequency of publication, and employed it to manipulate the flow of information.<sup>24</sup> The journal highlighted stories favourable to the King; played down William's successes; and devoted the first columns of each issue to royal statements.<sup>25</sup> Van Citters, the Dutch ambassador in

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<sup>21</sup> Schwoerer, Declaration of Rights, pp.123-5, Israel, Anglo-Dutch moment, pp.14-15.

<sup>22</sup> For some discussion of contemporary confusion about the content of the English constitution, see Schwoerer, Declaration of Rights, chapter 1; Speck, Reluctant revolutionaries, chapter 7.

<sup>23</sup> James II, By the King, a declaration ... given 6 November, 1688, (London, 1688). Prayers to be used in all Cathedral, collegiate and parochial churches, and chapels, ... during this time of publick apprehension from the danger of invasion, [London, 1688]. See also, [Edmund Bohun], The history of the desertion, (London, 1689), p.17-18.

<sup>24</sup> The increase in the frequency of publication was announced in The London Gazette, No.2400 (15 Nov. to 17 Nov., 1688), and lasted until the beginning of December.

<sup>25</sup> The Gazette reported that few Devonshire men were rallying to the Prince, and printed addresses favourable to James - No.2399, (12 Nov. to 15 Nov., 1688) and No.2401, (17 Nov. to 19 Nov., 1688) - but

London, reported the newspaper's impact back to the Hague. In a dispatch dated the 3rd December, (new style) he stated that, "in the Gazette many things are now daily brought forward to the prejudice and in the most hateful manner respecting His Highness [the Prince of Orange]".<sup>26</sup> Whilst James worked through official channels of communications, his supporters joined a pamphlet war with William. One Jacobite tract, published while Orange forces were still assembling in Dutch harbours, stole a march on the opposition, by condemning possible excuses for an invasion, before the Declaration had appeared.<sup>27</sup> Once that manifesto was published, James' writers dealt with it quickly and ably, producing several tracts in response. Some of these skilfully exploited public curiosity about the Prince's case to spread their own arguments. By printing the original Orange manifesto before their point by point replies, they ensured that many people would only see William's arguments in a safely neutralised form.<sup>28</sup>

If the means available to Jacobite propagandists were used competently, the arguments they deployed were surprisingly powerful. In October 1688, royal spokesmen had appeared to face an uphill task. They had had to defend an unpopular monarch against a cleverly-worded Declaration, which played skilfully on fears of court policies, and attempted to unite Englishmen behind a popular call for a free

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went silent on home news as William advanced through the West Country. The only domestic information carried in the six issues between the 24th November and the 13th December concerned James' routine appointments in Whitehall.

James' counter-declaration was printed in London Gazette, No.2397, (5 Nov. to 8 Nov.). Other proclamations carried included those to sabotage the Orange propaganda effort: James II, By the King, a proclamation to restrain the spreading of false news, ... given 26 October, 1688, (London, 1688); James II, By the King, a proclamation ... given 2 November, 1688, (London, 1688) - this forbade publication of the Prince of Orange's Declaration.

<sup>26</sup> British Library Additional Ms. 34,510, f.184 - Van Citters to the States General, 3rd December 1688 (new style).

<sup>27</sup> The Dutch design anatomized, or a discovery of the wickedness and injustice of the intended invasion, (London, 1688).

<sup>28</sup> See, Some reflections upon His Highness the Prince of Orange's Declaration, (Edinburgh, 1688); Animadversions upon the Declaration of His Highness the Prince of Orange, (London, 1688); The Prince of Orange his Declaration, shewing the reasons why he invades England, with a short preface, and some modest remarks on it, (London, 1688).

legislature.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, they did a good job. In the weeks during and after the invasion, court pamphleteers managed to construct a coherent and potentially convincing case, which showed great panache in turning the principles of the Orange manifesto back on its authors.

The Jacobites took on the Declaration's constitutional arguments directly. Their central contention was that William's manifesto had completely misunderstood the fundamental law of England. They argued that the Declaration was wrong to interpret the English constitution as sanctioning resistance to existing authority (albeit in extraordinary circumstances), because no constitution could possibly be read in this way. Taking up the suggestion in the first paragraph of the Williamite manifesto that the basic aim of all government was the security, protection and happiness of its subjects, Jacobites asserted that the Declaration's permission for men to break their allegiance to James would subvert this agreed objective of politics.<sup>30</sup> A right to resistance, exercised simply when men felt themselves aggrieved, would cause endless disorder, which would deny people the basic advantages of civil society.

To drive this point home, royal propagandists concentrated on the threat of anarchy from William's invasion. They stressed that war and confusion could be the only result of the Prince's recklessness, and painted a lurid portrait of an England ravaged by rebellion. One writer highlighted the savagery of men who supported the Orange cause by asking them,

Does the King's Indulgence to Roman Catholics and Dissenters absolve you from your obedience? Are you at liberty to choose who must govern you? In the name of Justice and Morality answer these Questions. If you justifie the Affirmative, you are fit to live in no Society that is Christian, or to be protected by it, that can at your own

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<sup>29</sup> Westwood and Greenburg, Subjects and sovereigns, demonstrated the role belief in Parliament as an essential element of the English constitution had in building opposition to James.

<sup>30</sup> William's Declaration had opened with concern for the "public peace and happiness" of the kingdom. Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, col.1.



free will, and when you dislike any proceedings in the Government, presently shift your Ubedience.<sup>31</sup>

Other authors accused William of risking misery and "the heavy ... calamities of war", whilst the prayers issued against the Orange forces asked God to deliver the nation from "the effusion of Christian blood".<sup>32</sup> Jacobites were particularly keen to raise the disturbed spectre of the 1640s and 1650s. These, of course, were decades when England had suffered horribly from revolt; and royal propagandists knew that evoking them would be effective in a nation still psychologically scarred by the experience.<sup>33</sup> James himself opened with the Civil War card in a proclamation of the 28th September. Reviewing the invasion force gathering in Dutch harbours, he turned on its advocates, describing them as

Persons of wicked and restless Spirits, implacable Malice, and desperate Designs, who [have] no Sense of former Intestine Distractions, the Memory of the Misery whereof should Endear and put a Value on that Peace and Happiness which hath long been enjoyed.<sup>34</sup>

Having established the dangers of revolt, the Jacobites portrayed the English constitution as a bulwark against these evils. They asserted that the Stuart system of government avoided chaos by vesting power in the monarch, and forbidding active resistance to his authority. They pointed out that disobedience had never been legitimately sanctioned in England, and demonstrated that behaviour similar to William's had been condemned by authoritative constitutional interpreters. When the Duke of Monmouth had claimed that his 1685 invasion had been intended to vindicate the English constitution, the courts had judged his actions

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<sup>31</sup> Dutch design anatomized, p.36.

<sup>32</sup> [Edmund Bohun], History ... desertion, p.18. James II, By the King, a proclamation ... given 20 October, 1688, (London, 1688). See also, Dutch design anatomized, pp.10-17.

<sup>33</sup> The dominant horror of revolt occasioned by the Civil War is the starting point for H.T.Dickinson, Liberty and property: political ideology in eighteenth-century Britain, (London, 1977) - see especially pp.13-14.

<sup>34</sup> James II, By the King, a proclamation ... given 28 September, 1688, (London, 1688).

treasonous.<sup>35</sup> The crux of the Jacobite case was, therefore, that William's invasion was illegal. Despite the Prince's claims to uphold English system of government, and his beguiling call for Parliament to sit, the man was actually flouting the law, and destroying the very constitution he pretended to come to save.

From this point, the Jacobites were free to attack William with his own arguments. They were fond of pointing out that, since naked force was all that was left once legitimate authority had been overthrown, the Prince of Orange would ultimately have to impose a far worse tyranny than the one he pretended was looming under James. As they made this argument, Jacobites were able to pick up the rhetoric of the manifesto, and hurl it back at the Orange camp. William was constantly accused of ambition and autocracy, and his invasion was said to "subvert our peace, and if it prevail, our laws, and leave us none, but at the mercy of an arbitrary sword".<sup>36</sup>

Another opportunity of using the Declaration against its authors arose because James had made concessions. In September and October 1688, the King had embarrassed the Williamites by removing all the carefully listed grievances of their manifesto. He had abandoned his chief counsellors, relieved his pressure on the Church, and dismantled the machinery by which he hoped to secure a pliant Parliament.<sup>37</sup> This response may have added to the impression that James was an unprincipled opportunist, but it also left room for Jacobite pamphleteers to suggest that William's complaints had been answered, and so to argue that the Prince's aim could not possibly be the defence of the English constitution.<sup>38</sup> The propagandists were able to mock the Declaration by suggesting that since James was now ready to meet a free legislature, but had been forced to cancel an election in the face of William's

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<sup>35</sup> Dutch design anatomized, p.35.

<sup>36</sup> Animadversions upon the Declaration, p.20. See also Some reflections on ... the Prince of Orange's Declaration, p.13.

<sup>37</sup> For an account of these concessions from James's point of view, see John Miller, James II, pp.196-9.

<sup>38</sup> For instance, James reminded the country that he had restored borough charters in James II, By the King, a proclamation for the speedy calling of a Parliament ... given 30 November, 1688, (London, 1688).

invasion, the only thing preventing the assembly for which the Prince had called was the national emergency he, himself, had created. James argued in his counter-declaration that William was the "sole obstructor" of the legislature everybody wanted; whilst the author of the Animadversions upon the Declaration asserted such a body would now be sitting if William were not occupying the kingdom.<sup>39</sup> "The King did call a free Parliament ... and ... His Highness would not let it sit."<sup>40</sup> This argument did sufficient damage to the Williamites' manifesto, that they were forced shore up their position against it. Late in October 1688, William produced an Additional Declaration, arguing that James' concessions were merely "pretended acts of grace".<sup>41</sup>

Of course, few political arguments are absolutely unanswerable: so by itself, the fact that the Jacobites could respond to the Orange manifesto does not prove they successfully challenged its hold on public opinion. However, there is evidence that James was attracting popular support in 1688/9, and that the arguments he promoted were the reason for this. Not only were there demonstrations in favour of the King, important political actors can be seen taking up the case put by his pamphleteers, and urging it upon their contacts as Englishmen took sides.<sup>42</sup> The particular point that James had redressed grievances and restored "every thing a thankful Protestant or Church of England man could desire" seems to have been accepted by an important group of "Anglican" politicians who had led resistance to the court earlier in the year, but now saw William's invasion as ruining their chance to shape royal

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<sup>39</sup> London Gazette, No.2397, Animadversions upon the Declaration, p.25.

<sup>40</sup> Animadversions upon the Declaration, p.31.

<sup>41</sup> The Additional Declaration, given at the Hague on the 24th October, was appended to several of the editions of the original Declaration circulating in England in 1688/9.

<sup>42</sup> For demonstrations see London Gazette, No.2401 (popular demonstration in Salisbury); No.2402 (loyal addresses from boroughs). The King seems to have been greeted with joy by some sections of the London population when he returned from his first, abortive flight in December 1688, see James Macpherson ed., Original papers relating to the secret history of Great Britain ... to which is prefixed extracts from the life of James II, 2 vols (London, 1735), vol.1, p.168.



policy.<sup>43</sup> Similarly, Sir John Reresby recorded that, late in November, some of gentry around York (where he was James' Governor) had demanded that the county elite stand by the King with their lives and fortunes. Reresby revealed some of the feeling behind this, when protesting that James was now willing to listen to Parliament.<sup>44</sup> At the same time, a correspondent of John Ellis, living in London, talked of a "richer" and "soberer" sort of people, afraid that current events were "like to ... entail war upon the nation".<sup>45</sup> For at least a few weeks, therefore, the Jacobites' arguments seem to have struck home. Their orchestrated fear of bloodshed; their message that the King was now ready to grant concessions; and their accusations that William was behaving illegally; ensured that the Prince's manifesto had to fight a very tight engagement.

### III

The strength of the Jacobite response was not the only problem with William's Declaration-based propaganda. The manifesto itself had internal weaknesses which blunted its effectiveness as an Orange tool. Chief among these was the document's inflexibility. Although the manifesto made a good case for William's involvement in English politics in October 1688, it left hostages to fortune, because it could not cope with the rapid course of events in the following winter.

In particular, the Declaration's arguments were rendered obsolete by the unexpectedly swift dissolution of James' power. The old King's authority had begun to weaken dramatically in mid-November. His military position was undermined when his army officers, whom he had travelled to meet at Salisbury, advised that it would be unwise to take on the Prince's forces advancing from the West. They recommended a retreat back

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<sup>43</sup> See Mark Goldie, "The political thought of the Anglican Revolution", in Beddard, Revolutions of 1688, pp.102-136.

The term "Anglican" is anachronistic, but is useful to distinguish the national establishment from other Churches, tolerated after William's arrival.

The quote is from Dutch design anatomized, p.18.

<sup>44</sup> Andrew Browning ed., The Memoirs of Sir John Reresby, 2nd edition, (London, 1991), pp.528, 533.

<sup>45</sup> The Ellis correspondence, 2.vols (London, 1829), vol.2, p.311.



to London: advice which, when taken, meant abandoning most of Southern England to the Orange army. This demoralising decision coincided with a few highly placed defections to William, and the news of a rising in the North under the Williamite Earl of Danby. These events broke the King's nerve. On returning to London, James sent commissioners to Hungerford to treat with William, but simultaneously bundled his wife and son out of the country, and then slipped his palace in an attempt to join them in France.<sup>46</sup>

From this very early point, the Declaration began to cause problems for the Orange camp. The rapid developments of early December stimulated a change in William's behaviour which began to jar with the claims of his manifesto. Before James' flight, William had been concerned to minimise his direct conflict with the King. The Declaration had been carefully worded to suggest that the Prince had no designs on James, and William had over-ruled a large party amongst his English supporters at Hungerford, who had urged an immediate supersession of royal authority.<sup>47</sup> Yet after the 11th December, William's caution evaporated. He made straight for London, (his progress in early December had been deliberately leisurely), and dared to order James around.<sup>48</sup> When the unfortunate King had been brought back to London, having been captured on his first flight, William commanded that he leave the city. James was removed to Rochester, from whence he finally escaped to France

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<sup>46</sup> The basic narrative of James' collapse can be traced in W.A. Speck, Reluctant revolutionaries, p.87; J.R. Western, Monarchy and Revolution: the English state in the 1680s, (London, 1972), pp.274-83. The importance of the defection of Anne (James' daughter) on James' morale is stressed in Maurice Ashley, The Glorious Revolution of 1688, (London, 1966), p.167. The northern rising is described in David H. Hosford, Nottingham, nobles and the North: aspects of the Revolution of 1688, (Hamden, Conn., 1976).

<sup>47</sup> Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, col.10. J.R. Jones, The Revolution of 1688 in England, (London, 1972), p.304.

<sup>48</sup> On hearing the news of James' flight, William cancelled plans to visit Oxford and turned his army towards London.

on 23rd December.<sup>49</sup> There has been some disagreement about what caused this alteration in William's behaviour. Robert Beddard has argued that it stemmed from a decision to seize the throne. He suggests that before learning of James' first flight, the Prince had merely wanted a government in England which would secure Orange interests in the country, and only resolved on gaining royal authority on the 11th.<sup>50</sup> J.R.Jones has agreed, but other historians have argued for earlier dates for William's regal ambition, and the Prince's own thinking was, as so often in his career, too opaque to decide between opposing interpretations of his conduct.<sup>51</sup> William's central international objective - preventing an Anglo-French alliance - might have been achieved either by seizing the throne, or merely by saddling James with an anti-French Parliament. It is doubtful whether he had definitely chosen between these options before he could assess his progress in England. Yet whatever the truth, William's style certainly altered in early December. If he had decided to be King before the 11th, he started acting in accordance with that ambition only after that date.

The change caused an immediate problem for William's Declaration-based propaganda. The manifesto had been drafted in October, when, even if William had had royal ambitions, it would have been disastrous to reveal them. In the autumn, the Prince had wanted support from as many Englishmen as possible, and so could not directly challenge the title of a legitimate monarch.<sup>52</sup> He had also had to be careful not to alienate

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<sup>49</sup> Pinkham, William III, p.199; Ashley, Glorious Revolution, p.174. William arrested the envoy James sent to him after his capture and return to London, Western, Monarchy and Revolution, p.296. John Miller, The Glorious Revolution, (Harlow, 1983), p.17, states William was acting as King by the end of December despite his lack of formal title.

<sup>50</sup> Robert Beddard, A kingdom without a King: the journal of the provisional government in the Revolution of 1688, (Oxford, 1988), pp.34-6.

<sup>51</sup> Jones, Revolution of 1688, p.304, states William's attitude at Hungerford shows "that he had not committed himself to depriving James of sovereign powers". On the other hand William's modern biographer dates the regal ambition sometime in summer 1688; Baxter, William III; as does Speck, Reluctant revolutionaries, p.75.

<sup>52</sup> Schwoerer, Declaration of Rights, pp.109-111 charts the process of drafting and revision to secure maximum support amongst Englishmen.

members of the European alliance he had built up against France.<sup>53</sup> The Declaration, therefore, contained no direct attack on James' position. As has been shown, it blamed the maladministration of recent years on the King's evil counsellors, and its panacea for England's ills was not a change of monarch, but a free legislature, which could set English government back on a firm footing.<sup>54</sup> William's regal behaviour after mid-December was, therefore, unadvertised in his manifesto. There was nothing in it to justify his treatment of James, or his increasingly obvious desire for the throne. A gap had opened up between Orange propaganda, and William's use of the political situation.

This gap was damaging. For a start, it seemed to confirm accusations, made by James' supporters in the autumn, that William was hiding an ambitious desire for the throne under lesser demands. In his 6th November counter-declaration, the old King himself had pointed out that the Prince was already using the royal style in his presumptuously executive orders.<sup>55</sup> More importantly, the new situation provided men who opposed William's elevation with new arguments. First, they could protest that many of those who had agreed with the Declaration, and had risen for William, had never intended to chase out James. Second, they could use the Prince's own manifesto to warn him that to remain honest, he must adhere to its strict terms.<sup>56</sup> There was a sense, therefore, in

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<sup>53</sup> Jonathan Israel, "William III and toleration", in Ole Peter Grell, Jonathan I. Israel and Nicholas Tyacke eds, From persecution to toleration: The Glorious Revolution in England, (Oxford, 1991), pp.129-170 - p.144 sets the Declaration within William's broad strategy of reassuring his foreign allies about his intentions in England.

<sup>54</sup> Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, cols 2, 10-11.

<sup>55</sup> London Gazette, No.2397.

<sup>56</sup> See, for example, Reflections upon our late and present proceedings in England, [1689]; A speech to His Highness, the Prince of Orange, by a true Protestant of the Church of England, as established by law, (London, 1689).



which William lost control of his own document. In the changed circumstances of December, it became available as a loyalist text.<sup>57</sup>

The winter of 1688/9 in fact saw two coherent attempts by leading politicians to block William's path to the throne with his own document. The first came immediately after James' first flight. Fearing for public order, Bishop Turner of Ely and Lord Rochester called a meeting of all peers in London to exercise authority whilst the King was away. This meeting, first convened in the Guildhall, had a political, as well as an policing purpose. Its instigators were loyalists who wished to use the assembly to uphold James's claims to the throne. Turner drew up a declaration stating that the peers wanted a free legislature, which could allow the King to come "home again with honour and safety". To achieve this, they proposed to treat with the Prince "on the foot of his Declaration".<sup>58</sup> The Lords thus used William's manifesto in an attempt to thwart his ambition.<sup>59</sup> They embraced the Orange manifesto because they had noticed that, read literally, it upheld James' authority. Its central demand - the calling of Parliament - could only legally be satisfied by the King.<sup>60</sup> In this situation, Williamite peers at the Guildhall had to act quickly to stop the Declaration being subverted into a loyalist tract. A party led by Wharton and Montagu objected to some of the terms in Turner's draft declaration, and managed to water it

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<sup>57</sup> The term "loyalist" here refers to those who opposed the removal of James from the throne in the winter of 1688. "Jacobite" has been used to denote the narrower group of people who opposed William's expedition. Men such as Sir Edward Seymour, and the Earl of Danby belonged to the first group, but not the second.

<sup>58</sup> A letter from Turner dated February 17th 1688[1689] explaining the course of events and his motivation (Bodleian Rawlinson Ms. D 836, ff.113-116) is printed in Robert Beddard, "The loyalist opposition in the Interregnum: a letter of Dr. Francis Turner, bishop of Ely on the Revolution of 1688", Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, 40 (1967), pp.101-9.

<sup>59</sup> Robert Beddard has developed this argument in "The Guildhall Declaration of the 11th December, 1688, and the counter-revolution of the loyalists", Historical Journal, 11 (1968), pp.403-20; Beddard, Kingdom without a King, p.36.

<sup>60</sup> William's camp was in particular difficulty on this point, because not only the King, but the Great Seal, the legitimating symbol of his authority had gone missing. For speculation on what had happened to it, see K.Merle Chacksfield, Glorious Revolution, 1688, (Wincanton, 1988), p.190.

down, exploiting concerns at the possible consequences of division during London's instability.<sup>61</sup>

All was not lost for loyalism, however. William's arrival in London on the 18th December, was followed by the decision to call a Convention, constituted in the same way as Parliament, to settle the government of England. Many of the members of this body, which first met in mid-January 1689, were opposed to offering William the crown.<sup>62</sup> As a result, the assembly fell into a violent dispute over whether the throne was vacant.<sup>63</sup> At this juncture, opponents of Orange ambitions adopted the tactic of the Guildhall peers. They tried to hold William to his original manifesto. They requested that the Prince's Declaration be read aloud, and pointed out that the document said nothing of an empty throne, or of displacing James.<sup>64</sup> Again William's supporters were forced to spent bitterly fought hours trying to refute such logic. This loyalist activity was a graphic demonstration of how dangerous the shift in William's objectives had been. Amongst those working against the Prince's elevation in the Convention were Sir Edward Seymour and the Earl of Danby. Both these men had risen for William in November, but were now disillusioned by his escalating claims. Seymour had been made Governor of Exeter by the Prince soon after his landing, but, come January, this West Country gentleman had become deeply mistrustful of

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<sup>61</sup> Beddard, Kingdom without a King, p.39. The document was published as A declaration by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in and about the Cities of London and Westminster assembled at Guildhall, the 11th day of November, 1688, (London, 1688).

<sup>62</sup> Western, Monarchy and Revolution, p.300-1; Jones, Revolution of 1688, p.314; Speck, Reluctant revolutionaries, p.102. The position and dilemmas of some of these men in 1688 are nicely summarised in John Miller, "Proto-Jacobitism".

<sup>63</sup> The debates started by splitting the Commons: see Anchitel Grey, Debates of the House of Commons from ... 1667 to ... 1694, collected by A.Grey, 10 vols, (London, 1769) vol.9, pp.6-83; John Somers, "Notes of what passed in the Convention ... 28th January 1689" (these are Somers manuscript notes published in Miscellaneous state papers from 1501 to 1726, (London, 1778), vol.2, pp.401-25). They then divided the Commons, with its Williamite majority, from the Lords, who opposed the idea of a vacancy. The debate at large between the Lords and Commons at free conference held in the Painted Chamber ... relating to the word abdicated and the vacancy of the throne, 2nd edition, (London, 1710).

<sup>64</sup> Grey, Debates, vol.9, p.15; Schwoerer, Declaration of Rights, pp.175-6.

his benefactor. In conversation with the Earl of Clarendon, Seymour stated that his neighbours had come

in to the Prince of Orange upon his declaration, thinking in a free Parliament to redress all that was amiss; but that men now began to think that the Prince aimed at something else.<sup>65</sup>

He said he would speak to the Prince on this matter, but "if he did not find him upon the bottom of his Declaration, it would be impossible for honest men to serve him."<sup>66</sup> According to Sir John Reresby, such sentiments were widespread around this time. Describing the mood in London in early February he wrote

Ther was truly great discontents at this day, and the causes of them were thes: The Prince declared that had noe design for the crown and yet sought it all he could.<sup>67</sup>

By mid-January, the Declaration's failure to advertise William's regal objectives had begun to cause another set of problems for the Prince. Not only had it given his opponents a point around which to organise, it had also hampered the development of an Orange constitutional case to match the new situation. Having originally limited his demands to the calling of Parliament, it was difficult for William to extend them to include direct claims for his own authority once James was broken. The Prince could not go public with his desire for the throne, for fear of contradicting the document on which he had so far based his dealings with Englishmen. He might hope the Convention would grant him kingship, and might work behind the scenes to ensure it did: but he could not make open demands, because his earlier rhetoric had stressed the freedom of Parliament to deliberate the succession.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> S.W.Singer ed., The correspondence of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, 2 vols (London, 1828), vol.2, p.238.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Browning, Memoirs ... Reresby, p.553.

<sup>68</sup> The calling of a free legislature was the main theme of the following texts.

William III, The speech of the Prince of Orange, to some principle gentlemen of Somersetshire and Dorsetshire, on the coming to joyn His Highness at Exeter the 15th November 1688, (no place of publication, 1688)

William's answer to James' delegation during the Hungerford negotiations, 8th December 1688, The commissioners proposals to His Royal Highness the Prince of Orange, with His Highness's answer,



William was, therefore, forced into silence at the most crucial moments. When the Convention met to decide the Prince's future, he gave it no leads, and did not reveal his constitutional thinking.<sup>69</sup> Eventually, he did put pressure on the assembly, but he did this covertly. He leaked the news that if the body did not chose to make him King, he could not stay in England, and would take his army, the sole guarantee of order, back to Holland.<sup>70</sup> It was this threat of chaos that secured him the throne.<sup>71</sup> Thus in the end, William's much-lauded Declaration played a surprisingly small part in his advance. Over the winter there had been some attempt by Williamite pamphleteers to advance beyond the manifesto, and suggest that James had forfeited the crown; but Prince himself, still trapped by his original statement, had been unable to elaborate or propagate his cause.<sup>72</sup>

In early February, the Declaration began to pose William still further difficulties. It became clear that it risked reducing the

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(London, 1688).

William's speech to the Lords assembled at St. James', 21st December 1688, Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, col.21.

William's speech to the assembled members of Charles II's parliaments, 23rd December 1688, Journals of the House of Commons, vol.10, p.5.

<sup>69</sup> William gave no indication of his position in his letter to both Houses of the Convention, 22nd January 1688/9, Journals of the House of Lords, vol.14, pp.101-2. Whilst the Convention met, William was telling members of his entourage "he had now brought together a free and true representative of the kingdom: he left it therefore to them to do what they thought best for the good of the kingdom", Burnet, History ... own times, vol.3, p.394

<sup>70</sup> Burnet, History ... own times, vol.3, pp.395-6. To stay consistent with the Declaration in public, William had to make his position known via rumour and closet briefings. His threat was probably issued on 3rd February when William had called Halifax, Shrewsbury and Danby into a private meeting. Earlier, Fagel had refused to make the Prince's views clear to Halifax and Danby when they met with him. Jones, Parliamentary history ... Glorious Revolution, pp.36, 39.

<sup>71</sup> It is also worth remembering how much the Prince of Orange used his military domination of the capital, and downright intimidation of opponents, in the winter of 1688/9. See Robert Beddard, "The unexpected Whig Revolution of 1688", in Beddard, Revolutions of 1688, pp.11-101.

<sup>72</sup> See A free conference concerning the present Revolution of affairs in England, (London, 1689); A word to the wise for settling the government, (London, 1689); [Gilbert Burnet], An enquiry into the present state of affairs, and in particular, whether we owe allegiance to the King in these circumstances, (London, 1688).

monarchical powers which the Prince so much desired. In this area, Lois Schwoerer was aware of the problems the manifesto set the Orange camp, and the analysis offered below owes much to her work.<sup>73</sup> William's distress again stemmed from the fact that the Declaration had been written before it was clear that James would fall. The document therefore appealed to the fears of the English about the old King's misuse of the prerogative, and tried to gain support by suggesting that in future, Parliament must be allowed to define and limit royal power.<sup>74</sup> Once, however, it was clear that William could secure the throne, he had an obvious interest in retaining as much of the English monarchy's power as possible. His personal prestige, and his ability to organise war with France, were both dependent on his gaining a dominant place in the English polity. In these circumstances he had to bridle enthusiasm for restraining the executive, and was embarrassed to find his manifesto endangering this aim.

In the Convention, the Declaration was openly used to try to hedge the Prince with legal checks, should he secure the crown. On the 29th January, Lord Falkland, a Tory, who may have been trying to delay the offer of kingship, rose in the Commons to suggest that Englishmen's rights be considered before the throne was filled. In doing so he appealed directly to William's own words in his manifesto.

It concerns us to take such care that, as the Prince of Orange has secured us from Popery, we may secure ourselves from Arbitrary Government. The Prince's Declaration is for a lasting foundation of the Government. I would know what our foundation is.<sup>75</sup>

Other members of the Convention supported Falkland, again basing their comments on the Orange document. Hugh Boscowen, responding to a list of possible measures to restrain the prerogative, commented that "the Prince's Declaration pursues all those ends mentioned" and Sir William Williams said

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<sup>73</sup> Schwoerer, Declaration of Rights, pp.125, 236-7.

<sup>74</sup> The document promised William would "concur in every thing that may procure the peace and happiness of the nation, which a free and lawful Parliament shall determine". Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, col.10.

<sup>75</sup> Grey, Debates, vol.9. pp.29-30.

When we have considered the preservation of the Laws of England for the future, then it will be time to consider the person to fill the Throne. The Prince's Declaration has given us a fair platform.<sup>76</sup>

Over the next days, the idea of a statement of rights became less obviously a device to hinder discussion of William's promotion. It was taken up by men who hoped that a successful deposition of James might serve as an opportunity to limit the prerogative, and came to centre on an attempt to define Parliament's rights to control the monarchy. However, the Declaration was still the point of reference for men trying to guide the scheme through the Convention, and still encouraged peers and MPs to limit the King's power.<sup>77</sup>

All this forced William to throw his propaganda machine into gear-crunching reverse. The Prince had always had private misgivings about his manifesto's elevation of Parliament.<sup>78</sup> Now he showed open distaste for the implications of his original arguments. Determined not to accede to a diminished majesty, he put great pressure on the Convention to drop its scheme for parliamentary limitations. His influence on Commons committees seems to have trimmed down what was proposed, and he sent his close adviser Bentinck to the Lords to make his displeasure known.<sup>79</sup> After these initiatives, William abandoned overt opposition, but only once intense lobbying had reminded him that he could damage his image as the saviour of the nation's liberties.<sup>80</sup> When the scheme of limitation

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid. vol.9, p.30-1.

<sup>77</sup> On the 8th February, Sir Richard Temple recommended limiting demands to the things "the Prince has set out in his Declaration" to speed the statement of rights through the two Houses, and Richard Hampden used William's words in his manifesto to counter John Wildman's zealous, but jeopardising, suggestion that the document be sent to the Prince without going to the Lords. Grey, Debates, vol.9, p.80.

<sup>78</sup> In early September, as the Declaration was being composed, William twice wrote to his adviser and friend Bentinck, worrying that the clauses about Parliament put him entirely at the legislature's mercy. Schwoerer, Declaration of Rights, p.112.

<sup>79</sup> See Frankle, "Formulation ... Declaration of Rights": Schwoerer, Declaration of Rights, p.220-1.

<sup>80</sup> Schwoerer, Declaration of Rights, pp.232-7.

Jonathan Israel, after reading Schwoerer, has warned against an interpretation of 1688 which implies that William boxed himself in with his Declaration, Israel, Anglo-Dutch moment, pp.17-18. The Prince, Israel points out, was used to dealing with recalcitrant assemblies, and



emerged as the "Declaration of Rights" on the 14th February, and was presented to William with the offer of the throne, the new King said nothing to indicate that his acceptance of the crown bound him to its terms.<sup>81</sup>

After this debacle, it is not surprising that William's self-destructive constitutional propaganda was put to bed. In a famous passage written at the end of the eighteenth century, Edmund Burke commented on the overwhelming traditionalism of political discourse after 1688.<sup>82</sup> The Williamite regime encouraged this conservatism, dropping all mention of the Declaration, and stressing that the powers and prestige of the monarchy had not been diminished by 1688.<sup>83</sup> The new court attacked any effort to limit crown authority, particularly if it claimed inspiration from the 1688 manifesto. In 1689, for instance, William gave no support to efforts to give the Declaration of Rights a statutory basis. He admitted to Halifax, his Lord Privy Seal, that he

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always knew he had to compromise to secure the support of the political nation. Yet this view ignores both the extent to which the Declaration was being used by loyalists in the winter of 1688/9, and the attempts by Williamites to distance themselves from their own document.

<sup>81</sup> The declaration is published in Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, cols. 108-111. Its preamble listed the crimes of James which had been set out in the Prince's Declaration, and stressed that the Convention which had drawn up this new document was the free legislature for which the original manifesto had called. William, however, neither signed the document, nor swore an oath to uphold its terms, Schwoerer, Declaration of Rights, p.13. In his speech accepting the offer of the throne, made immediately after the Declaration of Rights had been read to him, he did say he would "preserve your religion, laws and liberties" and "concur in anything that shall be for the good of the kingdom", but he made no direct reference to the articles just put to him, Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, col.111.

<sup>82</sup> Edmund Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France, (Harmondsworth, 1968), p.103.

Stephen Zwicker, Politics and language in Dryden's poetry: the arts of disguise, (Princeton, 1984), pp.32-4, goes further, suggesting that debates in the Convention actually distorted the medium of political discourse, straining the meaning of words so that radical actions were deliberately disguised in conservative language.

<sup>83</sup> William had referred to his Declaration in a letter to the Convention on the 22nd January - later published as William III, His Highness the Prince of Orange his letter to the Lords ... assembled at Westminster in this present Convention, January 22, 1688/9, (London, 1689) - but never promoted the document again.

did not wish to confirm all the articles in the proposed bill, but that "the condition of his affairs overruled his inclinations in it".<sup>84</sup>

Later, William blocked moves to increase parliamentary power, even though their proponents cited original Orange principles in support of their schemes.<sup>85</sup>

Thus the part of the Williamite case based on the Declaration had effectively negated itself. The Prince who claimed to have come to uphold the rights of the legislature, was, by the summer of 1689, devoting great efforts to fighting off what he saw as legislative encroachment. One commentator noted a resulting collapse in the new King's reputation as the saviour of English liberty. Describing a bitter battle in William's first summer over whether the King should be allowed customs and excise revenues for life, Gilbert Burnet wrote:

[The King] expressed an earnest desire to have the revenue of the crown settled on him for life: he said he was not a king, till that was done; without that, the title of a king was only a pageant ... But a jealousy was now infused into many, that he would grow arbitrary in his government, if had once had the revenue; and would strain for a high stretch of prerogative, as soon as he was out of difficulties and necessities. Those ... who had lived some years at Amsterdam, had got together a great many stories, that went about the city, of his sullenness, and imperious way of dictating.<sup>86</sup>

#### IV

It is ironic that historians who wished to prove the efficiency of the Orange publicity in 1688 have left their hero with a surprisingly weak case. Studying the Declaration reveals that it contained no claim for William's regal or executive power, and was used as much by the Prince's opponents as his supporters. The manifesto which has been presented as the core of the Orange case had become defunct, and was

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<sup>84</sup> H.C.Foxcroft, The life and letters of Sir George Savile, 2 vols, (London, 1898), vol.2., p.217.

<sup>85</sup> In a debate on a triennial bill on the 28th January 1692/3, Anthony Bowyer reminded the House of Commons, "it was one of the articles of your Bill of Rights to have frequent Parliaments when this government was first settled." - Henry Horwitz ed., The parliamentary diary of Narcissus Luttrell, 1691-3, (Oxford, 1972), p.391. Nonetheless, William defeated the bill, see below, chapter 6, section I.

<sup>86</sup> Burnet, History ... own times, vol.4, pp.60-1.

being glossed by its sponsors, only weeks after its issue. However, before concluding that William's propaganda was a failure, and that he got what he wanted simply by force, it is important to check whether the Declaration was as central to his case as has been supposed. It is conceivable that if a return is made to the beaches of Torbay, and the publicity surrounding the Dutch invasion examined again from the beginning, other lines of Williamite argument might be discerned. Once eyes have been shielded from the dazzling glare of the Prince's manifesto, it may be possible to perceive an alternative Orange rhetoric, which was not rendered embarrassing by the flow of events, and was not dropped by William almost as soon as it had been formulated.



## Chapter Two

The Language of Reformation and the Revolution of 1688

## I

When William of Orange landed at Brixham, Devon, on the 5th November, 1688, one of the first to congratulate him was his chaplain, Gilbert Burnet.<sup>1</sup> Burnet was an Anglican cleric of Scottish origin, who had entered court politics in the 1660s through his association with Lauderdale. He had been favoured by Charles II, but had been deeply suspected by James, and had left England when Charles died. He had gone to Holland in 1686, and, despite opposition from the English court, had become an adviser to the Stadholder.<sup>2</sup>

It is important to study Burnet in any re-evaluation of Williamite propaganda, because he stood at the heart of William's publicity machine. Since 1672, when the Orange party had come to power in the Netherlands, the Prince had maintained an extremely effective organisation for broadcasting his ideology. Co-ordinated by the Stadholder's allies, Gaspar Fagel and William Bentinck, this propaganda machine had used its extensive political contacts, and the unrivalled Dutch printing industry, to launch sophisticated campaigns of persuasion.<sup>3</sup> The system had first been developed in the early years of Orange rule, when the United Provinces had faced invasion from Louis XIV's France. Between 1672 and 1678, William's publicity men had cut their teeth printing descriptions of French barbarities, and publishing William's morale-lifting letters and speeches.<sup>4</sup> After the war, these engines of propaganda had been directed across the North Sea to foster Williamite sentiment in Britain. The Declaration of 1688, which was

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<sup>1</sup> Burnet, History ... own times, vol.3, pp.327-8.

<sup>2</sup> Dictionary of national biography, 63 vols (London, 1865-1900), vol.3, pp.394-402. For Burnet's activities in the Hague, and tension with James' court, see T.E.S.Clarke and H.C.Foxcroft, A life of Gilbert Burnet, bishop of Salisbury, (Cambridge, 1907), pp.205-250.

<sup>3</sup> Some consideration is given to William's publicity machine in Carswell, Descent on England, pp.25-9.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. pp.27-8; Geyl, The Netherlands, pp.133-5; Pieter Geyl, Orange and Stuart, 1641-72, (London, 1969), pp.392-3.

produced by Fagel, Bentinck, and their contacts, was merely the culmination of a series of initiatives taken to undermine James.<sup>5</sup> In 1687, for instance, William's supporters had arranged to publish a letter from Fagel to an English agent, which had made clear the Prince's opposition to his father-in-law's unpopular policies. Written in consultation with Bentinck and the Stadholder, this work flooded England at the beginning of 1688, and encouraged English Protestants to look to Holland for their patron.<sup>6</sup>

After arriving at the Hague in 1686, Gilbert Burnet rapidly penetrated to the core of this Orange publicity machine. Although much of the evidence for Burnet's activities in Holland came from his own pen, and may well exaggerate his role, there is independent confirmation that this cleric soon came to enjoy the confidence of William.<sup>7</sup> From his earliest Dutch days, Burnet became a close friend and spiritual adviser to the Prince and his wife, and was privy to their most personal thoughts and problems.<sup>8</sup> He also co-operated with

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<sup>5</sup> The process of composing the Declaration, and consulting with William's English contacts is described in Schwoerer, "Propaganda", pp.851-2, and Schwoerer, Declaration of Rights, pp.107-113.

<sup>6</sup> The letter was published as William III and Mary II, Their Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Orange's opinion about a general liberty of conscience, (Amsterdam, 1687). For the impact of the pamphlet of public opinion in England see Carswell, Descent on England p.109; Bodleian Rawlinson Ms. A 139b, ff.178.

<sup>7</sup> James was so disturbed by Burnet's influence at the Hague that he made diplomatic representations about it, resulting in Burnet's formal exclusion from court between new year 1687, and summer 1688. Clarke and Foxcroft, Life of Burnet, p.222. In 1687, one of Mary's chaplains complained to the bishop of London that Burnet "is perpetually going to talk with the Princess in private", and that "Dr.B is everything here". Bodleian Rawlinson Ms. C 983, ff.110-2. On the other hand, Burnet was quite capable of denying close links with William during his time in the Hague when it suited his polemical purposes. See Gilbert Burnet, Reflections on a pamphlet entitled [Some discourses upon Dr.Burnet and Dr.Tillotson], (London, 1696), p.59.

<sup>8</sup> Burnet credited himself with patching up difficulties in the Stadholder's marriage, and read private letters between the Princess and her father. Burnet, History ... own times, vol.3, pp.137-9, 197-8. In 1686, Burnet was even asked how Mary should answer letters from James complaining about his own presence at the Hague. Bodleian Additional Ms. D 235 - extract from Burnet's original memoirs, reprinted in H.C.Foxcroft ed., A supplement to the "History of my own times", (Oxford, 1902), p.491.



Fagel and Bentinck in the production of Williamite propaganda.<sup>9</sup> Throughout his time in Holland he produced a string of tracts attacking James' religious stance: both accusing the King of hypocrisy, and ridiculing the faith he espoused.<sup>10</sup> In 1687, he had been shown the correspondence which had led to Fagel's published letter, and had been employed by its authors to translate the work into English.<sup>11</sup> In 1688, he helped to lay the foundations for the Orange invasion by publishing a tract questioning how far subjects should continue in obedience to tyrants.<sup>12</sup> He had also advised on the content of William's Declaration. In the summer before the Dutch invasion he had been consulted on the wording of the manifesto; had influenced the content of a separate declaration for Scotland; and had translated both works, shortening and heating up Fagel's turgid Dutch prose.<sup>13</sup> Within the Orange propaganda machine, Burnet seems to have been treasured for three reasons. He had first-hand experience of British politics; he was a fluent English speaker; and was a literary stylist, who had already enjoyed publishing success during his time in England.<sup>14</sup> His value was acknowledged by

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<sup>9</sup> Burnet reported he "found the Prince was resolved to make use of me" and was recommended to the confidence of Fagel. Burnet, History ... own times, vol.3, p.135.

<sup>10</sup> See Gilbert Burnet, Some letters; containing an account of what seemed most remarkable in Switzerland, Italy etc., (Amsterdam, 1686); [Gilbert Burnet], Reasons against the repealing the acts of Parliament concerning the test, (no place of publication, 1687); [Gilbert Burnet], A letter containing some reflections on His Majesty's Declaration for liberty of conscience dated the fourth of April 1687, ([London], 1687); [Gilbert Burnet], Three letters concerning the present state of Italy, (London, 1688); [Gilbert Burnet], An enquiry into the reasons for abrogation of the test, ([Amsterdam], 1688).

<sup>11</sup> Burnet, History ... own times, vol.3, p.215. The publication of [Gilbert Burnet ed.], Some extracts out of Mr James Stewart's letters which were communicated to Myn Heer Fagel, (Amsterdam, 1688), also shows Burnet intimate knowledge of what was going on.

<sup>12</sup> [Gilbert Burnet], An enquiry into the measures of submission to the supreme authority; and of the grounds upon which it may be lawful or necessary for subjects to defend their religion, lives or liberties, [Amsterdam, 1688].

<sup>13</sup> See Schwoerer, Declaration of Rights, pp.110-3; Burnet, History ... own times, vol.3, 300-302.

<sup>14</sup> For the most significant of his earlier works, the popular and influential History of the reformation, see below. This went through three editions between 1679 and 1683. He was also well known for



William himself as he took the decision to publish Fagel's letter in 1687. Writing to Bentinck to approve the suggested content of this epistle he stated,

Il me semble que quandt Mr. le Pensionnaire auriot conceu la reponse, il ne seroit pas mouvais qu'il fut communique au Dr. Burnet qui cognoit pas seulement les affaires d'Angleterre au fons, mais je ne vois personne plus propre a le traduire en Angloise pour l'imprimer en suite et le publier.<sup>15</sup>

Once the invasion was launched, Burnet took an even more prominent role. As the member of the Orange team with local knowledge, he effectively became William's chief of propaganda.<sup>16</sup> He was appointed the Prince's chaplain for the expedition, and used his position to advise him on how present himself to the English.<sup>17</sup> He spoke in the Prince's defence at vital moments during the campaign; wrote supportive literature; and helped to answer the most damaging of the Jacobites' charges.<sup>18</sup> He also set up public occasions on which William's message could be propagated. These events included religious services to pray

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Gilbert Burnet, Some passages in the life and death of John, Earl of Rochester, (London, 1680), which ran to two editions in two years; and Gilbert Burnet, A sermon preached on the fast day, Decemb. 22 1680 at St Margaret's Westminster, before the Honourable House of Commons, (London, 1680), which again sold two editions in two years.

<sup>15</sup> N.Japikse, Correspondentie van Willem III en van Hans Willem Bentinck, 5 vols (1927), vol.1, pp.33-4 - the Prince of Orange to Bentinck, 21st September, 1687 (new style).

<sup>16</sup> Burnet's knowledge of England was so great that William and Bentinck seem to have sought his advice on where was best to land, see Japikse, Correspondentie, vol.3, p.53 - Admiral Russell to Admiral Herbert, 4th November, 1688.

<sup>17</sup> Some of his advice to the Prince during the invasion can be seen in two private memoranda printed in R.W.Blencowe ed., Diary of the times of Charles the Second by the Honourable Henry Sidney, 2 vols. (London, 1843), vol.2, pp.281-288, 288-291.

<sup>18</sup> For Burnet's speechifying, see below, this chapter, section II. Between the sailing of William's armada, and his coronation Burnet produced two important political tracts for the Orange party - [Gilbert Burnet], A review of the reflections on the Prince of Orange's Declaration, (no place of publication, 1688), and [Burnet], An enquiry ... present state of affairs. He also replied to a Jacobite tract, James II, His Majesty's reasons for withdrawing himself from Rochester, (Rochester, 1688), which claimed James had been forced to leave the country because of the threat to his life. See [Gilbert Burnet], Reflections on a paper entitled His Majesty's reasons for withdrawing himself from Rochester, (London, 1689).

for the Prince's success, ceremonial entrances into towns to display William to the people, and formal declarations of support by the Prince's English allies.<sup>19</sup> Burnet was even concerned with the physical production of Orange tracts and pamphlets.<sup>20</sup> He was, in fact, so central to the propaganda effort in 1688/9, that he must be the key to any re-description of that campaign. Only by analyzing Burnet's activities can historians assess whether the Declaration really was the main plank of the Orange platform.

A first glance at the chaplain's actions after the landing at Torbay, appear to confirm the dominance of the October manifesto. Burnet spent much of the winter of 1688/9 promoting this tract. He read it out in public as the Dutch troops advanced through the country, and defended it against its Jacobite detractors in print.<sup>21</sup> Yet whatever Burnet's commitment to the Declaration, he did not spend all his time promoting this one piece of paper. On the 23rd December, he preached a sermon before the Prince at St. James' Palace.<sup>22</sup> This was clearly part of the propaganda campaign. It was rapidly published at the Prince's special command, and was produced by Richard Chiswell, the printer who

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<sup>19</sup> For religious services and ceremonial entrances, see below, this chapter, section II. For a public declaration by the Prince's supporters, see General association ... Devon. For Burnet's concern that this document be distributed, see British Library Egerton Ms. 2621 f.67 - letter from Burnet to Admiral Herbert, 29th November, 1688. See also Clarke and Foxcroft, Life of Burnet, pp. 252-253; Burnet, History ... own times, vol.3, p. 337.

<sup>20</sup> For Burnet's concern over the mechanics of publication see Notes and Queries, Series 2 2, (1856) p.246 - a transcription of British Library Harley Ms. 6798 ff.264-268 - a letter from Burnet dated 29th November 1688. It includes the sentence "Une presse nous feroit icy plus de service qu'un regiment ... le monde est fait d'une maniere que s'il ne void des imprimes, il n'ajoute pas foy aux choses les plus autorisees et les plus certain" - f.267.

<sup>21</sup> As its title suggests Burnet's Review of the reflections on the ... Declaration was a point by point refutation of Jacobite animadversions on William's manifesto. For a public reading of the Declaration, in Exeter, see below, this chapter, section II.

<sup>22</sup> Gilbert Burnet, A sermon preached in the chappel of St James' before His Highness the Prince of Orange, the 23rd of December, 1688, (London, 1689).

handled Burnet's other polemical pieces.<sup>23</sup> Yet although it endorsed William's actions, this sermon steered clear of the constitutional justifications found in the Declaration. Instead, it advanced a vision of divinely-instigated national reformation.

The central argument of the St James' sermon was that William's invasion was favoured by God. Much of the address was dedicated to a demonstration that the Prince of Orange's success had been divinely ordained. According to the preacher, William's progress to London had been marked by a series of extraordinary miracles. In the Channel, unusual changes in wind direction had given the Orange fleet the best possible military advantage. In Europe, James' natural supporter, Louis XIV, had unpredictably lost his diplomatic dominance, and united all nations against him. In England, the evil counsellors' plots had been unexpectedly revealed. Remarkably, William had broken through the divisions of the English and "had turned the hearts of the whole nation as one man to him."<sup>24</sup>

Of itself, this observation about Williamite political argument is not news. Burnet's 23rd December sermon was merely the earliest statement of a providentialism which was impressively catalogued by Gerald Straka over twenty years ago. In a study of Anglican theorists of the 1690s, Straka suggested that many of them recommended submission to the post-Revolution government on the grounds that it had been imposed by the will of God. This, he argued, enabled Churchmen to rescue something of their traditional principle of divine right.<sup>25</sup> However, despite its long-standing recognition, it is still worth stressing Williamite providentialism, because its excavator's work has come under attack. Since Straka wrote other historians have accepted the popularity of providential rhetoric after the Revolution, but have questioned the importance of its discovery. The chief objection has been that providential explanation of political change in the 1690s was

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<sup>23</sup> The sermon appears in the stationer's catalogues for Hilary 1689, indicating that it was published before May of that year. Edward Arber ed., The term catalogues 1688-1709, (London, 1905), p.248.

<sup>24</sup> Burnet, Sermon ... St James ... 23rd December, 1688, pp.10-14, 8.

<sup>25</sup> Straka, Anglican reactions ... 1688, especially chapter 6.



an intellectually empty, and very tired, commonplace, which could be used to justify any event. J.P.Kenyon, in particular, has called this sort of rhetoric "a devotional platitude". For him, it was "the small change of polemical ... vocabulary". It "did not change men's minds, [but] only confirmed them in decisions they had reached for other reasons." Kenyon suggested that writers like Burnet, who used providential language, always made other arguments carry the weight of their case.<sup>26</sup> Mark Goldie has similarly pointed out that providence could be used to justify a wide range of political positions. For him it was an "agreed" concept, available to men of very different opinions.<sup>27</sup> Both historians have demonstrated that, even to men in the 1690s, it was clear that providentialism could collapse into an unsatisfactory justification of success by success. William Sherlock's book, The case of allegiance, which based its whole defence of Orange rule on providential grounds, was widely ridiculed by contemporaries.<sup>28</sup>

Yet it would be a mistake to dismiss Burnet's providentialism, either as a crude justification of a fait accompli, or as a conventional gift-wrapping for a case whose substance was other principles. Providence was vital to Burnet's argument, but his position was not intellectually vacuous. His understanding of God's recent intervention was deepened by placing the events of 1688 within a history of "reformation". In the 23rd December sermon, William's invasion was given meaning, not just by God's evident support for the Prince's forces, but also by explaining it as part of a process of purgation and return to godly purity.

To understand this, it is useful to look back, at some length, to a book Burnet had written over a decade before. In 1677, Nicholas Sanders' sixteenth-century attack on English Protestantism, The English

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<sup>26</sup> Kenyon, Revolution principles, pp.24-5.

<sup>27</sup> Goldie, "Tory political thought", p.9.

<sup>28</sup> For this book [full title: William Sherlock, The case of allegiance due to sovereign powers, stated and resolved, (London, 1691)] and the responses to it, see Kenyon, Revolution principles, pp.26-34. Goldie, "Tory political thought", pp.90-125.

schism, had been reprinted in Paris.<sup>29</sup> Burnet, already a leading religious writer, had been asked by his friends to answer it, and, in 1679, produced the first volume of his History of the Reformation.<sup>30</sup> This work was a detailed account of England's sixteenth-century break with Rome, which many read as a political tract in the contemporary crises of the late 1670s.<sup>31</sup> What is important here, however, is Burnet's case against Roman Catholicism. Reviewing the state of the English Church before 1500, Burnet asserted that the Roman faith was an anti-religion. It had destroyed the purity of the primitive Christian Church, and built a corrupt edifice in its place. For Burnet, "popery" existed solely for the ambition, avarice and lust of its priests. It had deliberately encouraged debauchery in order to engross worldly wealth, and had invented a penitential system whose sole aim was to bring in cash.<sup>32</sup> Burnet admitted that godly men and women occasionally protested against the perversion of Christ's Church, but pointed out that such whistle-blowers had usually been ruthlessly persecuted by armies of bloodthirsty clerics.<sup>33</sup> The author of the History thus constructed popery as a protean source of evil. It was a complex of cruelty, error and debauchery, welded into a universal corrupting force in human history.

Matched against this evil in Burnet's book was the process of "reformation". The historian believed that the steady erosion of Christianity by popery had sometimes been reversed by efforts to restore morality and true righteousness. At particular moments, "reformation" had made headway, rolling back the forces of debauchery

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<sup>29</sup> The original book was Nicholas Sanders, De origine ac progressu schmatis Anglicani liber, (Rome, 1586). The French edition was Nicholas Sanders, Histoire du schisme d'Angleterre ... mis en Francois par Monsieur Mancroix, (Paris, 1676).

<sup>30</sup> Gilbert Burnet, The History of the Reformation of the Church of England, 6 vols (Oxford, 1865).

<sup>31</sup> For the polemical purpose and context of the History, see J.A.I.Champion, The pillars of priestcraft shaken: the Church of England and its enemies, (Cambridge, 1992), pp.26-32, 86.

<sup>32</sup> Burnet, History of the Reformation, passim, especially vol.1, pp.12, 15-6, 66-7; vol. 2, pp.16-17.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. passim., especially vol.1, p.68.

to restore the proper relationship between man and God. Burnet argued that this improvement was particularly likely when societies were ruled by godly magistrates. Progress was made when secular authorities became prepared to use the temporal sword to destroy Christ's enemies. The Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, which Burnet chronicled, was the most significant recent example. Advances towards godliness had been made when Henry VIII broke the power of the Pope in England, and when Edward VI put his monarchical weight behind righteous reformers. In the mid-Tudor period there had been a successful design

to restore Christianity to what it was at first, and to purge it of those corruptions, with which it was overrun in the later and darker ages.<sup>34</sup>

Vitally, although such moments of reformation were promoted by secular authority, they were not simply human. By studying them, the student could understand the way God intervened in history. His providence could be discerned initiating and guiding purgation, in accordance with an unfolding divine plan to further true religion. In Burnet's book, this emerging providential pattern gave coherence to the confused course of the English Reformation. Although the writer recognised the mistakes and wrong-turnings of the early English Protestants, he presented them as caught up in a great scheme, which, though only dimly perceptible at the time, had been clarified as it was revealed in the pattern of history. Thus, although Henry VIII had been a deeply flawed man who knew little of true religion, and although the Duke of Northumberland had been driven more by greed than piety, God's manipulation of events had ensured that both men unwittingly aided the righteous cause.<sup>35</sup> Once the process of reformation was under way, providence had fostered it and guided it towards its ultimate goal.

Despite its title, Burnet's History was not intended simply as a record of the past. In his volumes, the author argued that the effects of the sixteenth-century Reformation were still working themselves out.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid. vol.1, p.1.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. vol.1, p.11-12. The unsavoury reputations of Northumberland and other reformers were defended by telling readers to judge by the results rather than the motivations of these men's actions. Burnet warned, "These are the deepest secrets of divine providence", vol.2, p.11.



God's plan had continued beyond Henry and Edward's reigns, as he had protected the godly from popish challenge and had strengthened them against internal corruption. Whilst aiding reformation, however, God had expected some return from its beneficiaries. Through the decades since the 1530s, he had required that the English remain faithful to his cause, and had demanded that they join in his continuing purgation of vice and irreligion. Burnet published the History to remind his countrymen of their duties. He was especially keen that they remember there was still much to be done in securing true godliness, and that they never forget the ever-present threat of debauched popery.<sup>36</sup>

Burnet's thought in his History of the Reformation is perhaps best characterised as "Tudor" Protestant. It borrowed heavily from the historiographic tradition begun in 1648 with John Bale's Image of both Churches, and brought to its magnificent apotheosis in John Foxe's Acts and monuments, (the "Book of Martyrs") in 1563.<sup>37</sup> These writers had anticipated Burnet in analyzing the continuing struggle of two mystical bodies - the false Church and the true; and in suggesting that a combination of providence and the authority of godly magistrates could secure a final triumph against the forces of evil. Burnet's debt to Tudor authors is most strikingly revealed in the language he used to delineate the struggle against corruption. Sixteenth-century writers had quarried Revelation, the last book of the bible, for terms to describe the papal Church. In their works the Pope and the Roman hierarchy were frequently identified with the figures of Antichrist and the Whore of Babylon.<sup>38</sup> Despite Christopher Hill's claim that belief in

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<sup>36</sup> Burnet stated that the Church still had much to do in ensuring its wealth was put to good purposes and that its pastoral care was up to God's standards, *ibid.* vol.2, pp.14-19. He also berated the English for failing to live up to reformation in the seventeenth century, *ibid.* vol.2, p.29.

<sup>37</sup> John Bale, The image of both Churches after the Reuelacion of Sainct Ioyn the evangelist, [1648?], John Foxe, Acts and monuments of these latter and perillous dayes, touching matters of the Church, (London, 1563).

<sup>38</sup> See Henry Christmas ed., Select works of John Bale D.D., bishop of Ossory, (Cambridge, 1849), pp.264-640; Stephen Reed Cattley, The acts and monuments of John Foxe, 8 vols (London, 1837), vol.1, pp.526-28.

a tangible Antichrist did not survive in the mainstream of English thought after the Civil War, Burnet retained Tudor rhetoric, and was still prepared to label the Roman Church as the biblical Beast.<sup>39</sup> In 1688 he re-published a 1673 work, A discourse ... of the Roman Church. This tested the popish religion for its similarity to Antichristianism, and, to the author's (rhetorical?) regret, found an almost perfect fit. The Roman Church, he stated "whose faith was once spoken of throughout the world, is now become the mother of the fornications of the earth". It was a "Babylonish Rome", served by "merchants of Babylon", bearing the "characters of the Antichristian Beast."<sup>40</sup> Burnet's work, in fact, does much to support the survival of pre-Civil War thought patterns asserted in recent revisionist history.<sup>41</sup>

This extensive flashback to Burnet's pre-Revolution thought has been essential, because his philosophy was extended in defence of William's actions in 1688. The "Tudor" vision of history allowed a providential interpretation of events which did not collapse into a retrospective legitimation of worldly success. The 23rd December sermon echoed the assumptions of the History of the Reformation, and so gave a deeper meaning to William's invasion. In the address, popery was again attacked as a persecuting and debauching force. It was presented as striving endlessly to wipe out true religion, and the English Reformation was again shown to have delivered men from this hydra.

We are blest with that holy Religion which the Son of God revealed to the World, and are Reformed from those Corruptions which had defiled it, and that in so equal a manner, that we are the chief Object of the Roman Fury, as well as the just Glory of the Reformation.<sup>42</sup>

The sermon also repeated the extension of historical analysis into the recent past. Its key contention was that, since the Restoration,

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<sup>39</sup> Christopher Hill, Antichrist in seventeenth-century England, (London, 1971), pp.135-159.

<sup>40</sup> Gilbert Burnet, A discourse wherein is held forth the opposition of the doctrine, worship and practices of the Roman Church, to the nature, design and characters of the Christian faith, (London, 1688), quotes from pp.5, 10, 57.

<sup>41</sup> For this historiography, see above, Introduction, footnote 14.

<sup>42</sup> Burnet, Sermon ... St James ... 23rd December 1688, p.25.

England's reformation had been in danger. Papists had crept into the country and undermined godliness. They had surrounded the court in Charles' time, and dominated it under his brother James. True to their nature, they had encouraged a "spirit of atheism", hoping that it would clear a way for their perversions.<sup>43</sup> Roman agents had debauched the population's manners, replacing religion with sensuality, so that

The excesses of Rioting and Drunkenness, and the Disorders of all sorts, grew not only to be practiced, but gloried in, ... a Virtuous man [was] looked out of Countenance, if he could not go in to the madness of the time.<sup>44</sup>

In this context, William's invasion could be presented as part of the progressive unfolding of reformation. As the Orange expedition had destroyed a papist and sinful regime, Burnet could present it as a divine deliverance. God had intervened one more time to provide an opportunity to regain the momentum of spiritual renewal. The Orange invasion had been effected to re-establish

that Glorious Work, which God in a series of many signal Providences had set up in the last Age [Century], and which for the Sins and unreformed Practices of those who pretended to it, was brought so low in this.<sup>45</sup>

Most particularly, the providence offered a chance to reverse the vice of recent years. If the English responded to the grace given, they could reform themselves, and provide a moral base for the pure faith God desired. Burnet stressed the "solemn vows of amendment" made by men on William's expedition, and their engagements "of a serious and universal reformation".<sup>46</sup> At his most impassioned, Burnet underlined this point in almost millenarian language. Without following his Tudor and early Stuart models to the extent of adopting a rigidly apocalyptic interpretation of contemporary events, he was prepared to use millennial imagery to stress the magnitude of the blessed opportunity

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid. pp.22-4.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid. p.23.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. p.5.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. p.26.



just granted to England.<sup>47</sup> For him, 1688 was a moment in which Englishmen might finally bring their reformation to perfection. If they were diligent they might see "the most glorious beginning of a noble change in the whole face of affairs."<sup>48</sup>

We may, if we are not wanting to our selves, and to the Conjunction before us, hope to see that which may be according to the Prophetick style, termed a new Heavens and a new Earth.<sup>49</sup>

This historical interpretation saved Burnet's justification of the Orange invasion from ideological vacuity. The providence Burnet described on the 23rd December was more than the overly-flexible construct dismissed by Kenyon. It did not demand that men simply accept the twisting course of worldly events. Instead, it was a purposeful principle which had been guiding the world towards a divine goal. Through the pattern of events it controlled, this providence had established a comprehensible direction to history, which allowed men to distinguish between good and evil developments. God might, for his own reasons, permit his cause to suffer reverses, but his underlying objective remained clear, and men had a duty to aid it in all circumstances. In other words, although Burnet did believe that all

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<sup>47</sup> For earlier apocalypticism see Richard Bauckman, Tudor apocalypse, (Oxford, 1978) and Katherine R. Firth, The apocalyptic tradition in Reformation Britain, 1530-1645, (Oxford, 1979).

Some of Burnet's close colleagues - see below, chapter 3, section II, for their association - went further in the use of apocalyptic speculation. For the apocalypticism of Burnet's close friend William Lloyd, see E.S. de Beer ed., Kalendarium: the diary of John Evelyn, 6 vols (Oxford, 1955), vol.4, pp.630, 636-7, vol.5, 20-1. These references show that at the time of the Revolution, Lloyd was preaching and discussing the idea that recent events in Europe must be interpreted in the light of Revelation prophecies. For the millenarianism of Edward Fowler, with whom Burnet worked closely in the 1690s see Edward Fowler, A sermon preached at St Mary le Bow to the societies for the reformation of manners, June 26, 1699, (London, 1699), pp.47-50; Edward Fowler, A sermon preached at the Guildhall ... 7th Sept. 1704 being the day of publick thanksgiving for the late glorious victory obtained over the French, (London, 1704), pp.21-22. Fowler, who was increasingly suspected of mental instability by his fellow bishops, may have become involved with the French Prophets, a radical millenarian group popular in England around 1707. Hillel Schwartz, The French Prophets: the history of a millenarian group in eighteenth-century England, (London, 1980) p.308, 328.

<sup>48</sup> Burnet, Sermon ... St James ... 23rd December 1688, p.20.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. pp.20-1.

events stemmed from God's will, he did not think Christians must necessarily acquiesce in everything that happened. Men were righteous, not if they approved worldly success, but if they actively aided the reformation which providence, properly understood, had revealed. For instance, in the St James' sermon Burnet approved the Restoration as a divine blessing. However, Englishmen in 1660 had had greater duties than simply welcoming it. They had been obliged to use the peace it brought to establish national virtue. Burnet attacked the excessive drinking which had accompanied Charles' return; lamented the fact that the English had not reformed; and accused them of conspiring "to defeat the ends of the providence".<sup>50</sup> Similarly, although Burnet witnessed the legitimacy of William's recent expedition by the providential miracles which had aided its success, he did not establish its justice by these interventions. Throughout the 23rd December sermon, the requirement to support William stemmed, not from his triumph (which the preacher knew might ultimately justify any action), but from his purpose - the promotion of God's reformation.

The St James' address thus provided the basis for a self-sufficient Orange ideology, quite independent of the constitutional arguments of the Declaration. This ideology, which might be labelled "Williamite reformation", consisted of a series of interlocking assumptions about the providence of William's victory. Its central tenets were that popery was a debauching force which had been undermining God's rule in England, and that 1688 was a moment of divine deliverance from this evil. Within the ideology, the Revolution was legitimated as an opportunity to establish a reformed community, an event which should remind the English of their duty to live in righteousness. 1688 was a turning point in history, the moment at which correct relations between the deity and his people might begin to be restored. Thus during William's invasion Burnet could advance "reformation" as an genuine alternative to constitutional argument. It contained as devastating an attack upon James as the legal case, and was as intellectually robust and coherent.

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid. p.23.

## II

The Orange camp spent considerable effort in the winter of 1688/9 propagating Burnet's ideal. The 23rd December sermon was but one element of an energetic publicity campaign which spread Williamite reformation through a variety of sermons, speeches, ceremonies and symbolic actions. The great attraction of the rhetoric was that it avoided the main weakness of the Declaration. It did not lack a powerful argument for William's personal power and prestige. Seeing the Prince's own endeavour as integral to the divine deliverance, the rhetoric could present him as a near-sacred instrument of God's providence.<sup>51</sup> He was the longed-for godly magistrate, who might crush the false Church. His function was not only to destroy the old corrupt regime, but to inspire and lead the purgation which would characterise the new. "He seems born to be the great blessing of the age," Burnet told his audience at St James, "his first appearance in the world carried with it a deliverance".<sup>52</sup> Lionising the Prince in this way, the propaganda contained an explicit appeal for William to be given authority. It could thus be used to smooth over those dangerous moments in 1688/9 when the Prince's ambition became more stark. Its unchanging glorification of William scored over arguments in the Declaration, since it did not suffer embarrassment in the face of the unadvertised accumulations of Orange power.

The language emerged as soon as the Prince's intention to invade England became clear. Just before William's fleet sailed (flying pennants vowing to maintain the Protestant religion), Burnet preached to the assembled troops.<sup>53</sup> Although the text of this address was not

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<sup>51</sup> William had already been presented in these terms in his Dutch propaganda, especially when at war with the French. See Simon Schama, The embarrassment of riches: an interpretation of Dutch culture in the golden age, (London, 1987), pp.51-3, 275-276.

<sup>52</sup> Burnet, Sermon ... St James' ... 23rd December 1688, p.19. This seems to have reflected Burnet's private view of the Prince. See "A meditation on my voyage for England ... [intended] for my last words in case this expedition should prove disastrous", first published in Foxcroft, Supplement ... History, pp.522-8.

<sup>53</sup> For the sailing of the fleet see, The expedition of the Prince of Orange for England; giving an account of the most remarkable passages thereof, printed in A complete collection of papers, in twelve parts: relating to the great revolution, (London, 1689), part 3, pp.1-



printed, John Whittel, an apocalyptically-minded chaplain in the army, later published a report of it.<sup>54</sup> According to Whittel's account, Burnet's sermon was pure Williamite reformation. It asserted that the Prince of Orange was engaged in God's work, and stressed that amendment of morals was an essential part of the whole enterprise. Burnet asked that all the fighting men "be truly reformed" and was "very pressing unto holy life and conversation".<sup>55</sup> At about the time this sermon was preached, prayers for the expedition were published.<sup>56</sup> No author was given on the printed sheets, but the London Gazette, sneering at these treasonous supplications, claimed they had been written by Burnet.<sup>57</sup> Given their content, and the position of the supposed author within Williamite counsels in this period, such an attribution seems highly likely. The prayers (which were used constantly by the Orange forces, and supplanted James' prayers in areas which they controlled) continued the themes of Burnet's sermon.<sup>58</sup> They again emphasised that William's

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8, see especially p.3.

<sup>54</sup> Whittel published his account of William's expedition as, [John Whittel], An exact diary of the late expedition of his illustrious Highness, the Prince of Orange, (1689).

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. pp.23-4.

<sup>56</sup> A praier for the present expedition, ([Hague], 1688).

<sup>57</sup> London Gazette, No.2402.

<sup>58</sup> [Whittel], Exact diary, p.32 talks of the prayers being used on ship. Burnet, Sermon ... St James ... 23rd December, 1688, p.26, speaks of the vows of reformation (almost certainly in the form of reciting the prayers) made by the whole Orange company on its embarkation.

Reaction to the Gazette's report on the 19th November that William had forbidden praying for the King, is reported in Ellis correspondence, vol.2, p.333, - epistle to John Ellis 24th November 1688. This letter states the Gazette's reports were not initially believed in London, until confirmed by reliable witnesses writing from the West. See also BL Add Mss 34,510, ff.184-5 - Ambassador Van Citters to the States General of the United Provinces, 3rd December 1688 (new style).

Singer, Correspondence ... Clarendon, vol.2, pp.218, reports Clarendon's shock at the hostility of Burnet to forms of prayer which accepted James's position as King.

invasion of England was a blow for the true faith, and that it must be a moment of moral purgation.<sup>59</sup>

Grant O Gracious God that all of us, may be turning to thee with our whole hearts; Repenting us truly of all our past sins, and solemnly vowing to thee, as wee now doe, that wee will in all time coming amend our lives, and endeavour to carry our selves as becomes Reformed Christians. And that wee will show our Zeal for our holy Religion by living in all things suteably to it.<sup>60</sup>

Other works which appeared as William sailed re-enforced the burden of the Burnetine prayers and sermon. Two prose "characters" of the Prince presented their subject as the ideal godly magistrate.<sup>61</sup> They praised his diligence, temperance, and piety, and related his efforts to purge corruption from the United Provinces. For these biographers William was not simply a virtuous foreign ruler. They suggested that God had picked him out to save Christians beyond his own realm. One of the pieces stated the Prince had acted

as if he were designed by Heaven, not only to be the Saviour of his own Country and Religion, but the Champion of the Lord of Hosts, to deliver his true Church from the Fury, Treachery and Tyranny of its Enemies.<sup>62</sup>

The other asked why righteous men might not "hope to see this wondrous blessing by providence more diffusive, and not concluded within the narrow boundaries of Belgium".<sup>63</sup> The pamphlets thus used reformation ideas to hint that, in future, William's authority would extend over new kingdoms. An even more explicit argument for William's sovereignty in Britain was contained in a further 1688 pamphlet, which described a

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<sup>59</sup> Burnet's prayers were echoed by a similar set of forms used by the Dutch forces, see William III, The Prince of Orange His Letter ... English fleet.

<sup>60</sup> Praier ... present expedition

<sup>61</sup> Character [of William, Prince of Orange], (Hague, 1688); Character of His Royal Highness, William Henry, Prince of Orange, (London, 1689).

<sup>62</sup> Character ... His Royal Highness, p.6.

<sup>63</sup> Character [of William ... ]

miraculous vision in William's original principality of Orange.<sup>64</sup> On the 6th May, 1665, when William had acceded to the government of that state, a crown of light had appeared over its chair of state. Now, on the eve of William's expedition to England, it appeared again.

The production of reformation propaganda continued once William's forces were in England. On the 8th November, Burnet was sent by William to Exeter to organise the Prince's reception in that town.<sup>65</sup> The local bishop, Lamplugh, had already interpreted William's actions as rebellion, and fled to avoid association with them. In his preparations, Burnet attempted to get round such doubts over the legality of the invasion by stressing providential Protestant deliverance.

At the centre of Burnet's Exeter reception were two ceremonies. The first was William's triumphal entry into the city. This was an important piece of propaganda, which was described in a pamphlet printed by the Orange camp for those who had missed the original event.<sup>66</sup> It is worth analyzing the symbolism of the procession, as it reveals what the Orange camp was suggesting about the meaning of the Prince's advance. Some of the symbols were obvious enough. In the parade, at least according to the published account, there were "50 gentlemen, and as many pages to attend and support the Prince's banner, bearing this inscription, 'GOD and the PROTESTANT RELIGION'". Other parts of the procession, however, are harder to analyze. The Prince himself appeared "rid ... on a milk white palfrey. Armed cap a pee. A plume of white feathers on his head. All in bright armour, and 42

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<sup>64</sup> A relation from the city of Orange, of a crown of light that was there seen in the air, the 6th May, 1688, in Complete collection of papers, part 1, p.22.

<sup>65</sup> Details of his activities can be found in a letter [to his wife?] preserved as BL Harley Ms 6798 ff.264-268. See also Expedition of the Prince, p.6.

<sup>66</sup> A true and exact relation of the Prince of Orange his public entrance into Exeter, ([Exeter], 1688). William's triumphal entry into Exeter was "magnified" in London, according to Oldmixon, see Marion Grew, William Bentinck and William III, Prince of Orange: the life of Bentinck Earl of Portland from the Wellbeck Correspondence, (London, 1924), pp.136. For another description of this entry, see Whittel, Exact diary, p.46.



footmen running by him."<sup>67</sup> Although it is clear that William was being presented as a chivalric, Christian warrior in this display, decoding the precise symbolism of the white horse is difficult. It may just have been a striking visual image to draw the viewers attention to the most important man in the procession. It may have been a simple suggestion of purity.<sup>68</sup> However, it may also have had a millennial resonance. William's appearance echoed passages from Revelation which described God's terrible champions in the last days. "I saw and behold, a white horse and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering and to conquer "(Revelation 6:2). "I saw heaven opened and behold, a white horse, and he that sat upon him was called faithful and true, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war " (Revelation 19:11). William's entry into Exeter may thus have used powerful biblical imagery to suggest that the Prince was the ultimate godly magistrate. He had come to vanquish evil, to conquer and, most importantly, to gain kingship. This millennial element may have been re-enforced by the symbolic suggestion that William was a world ruler, whose God-given writ ran everywhere. The celebration included "200 blacks brought from the plantations of the Netherlands in America" who, also dressed in white, took their place in the procession.<sup>69</sup>

The second Exeter ceremony was a service of thanksgiving in the Cathedral. A later story, accusing Burnet of using muskets to threaten the local clergy into changing the form of prayer, may suggest his zeal in organising the event.<sup>70</sup> At this service, constitutional propaganda was used, but the occasion did not rely on it. The reading of William's Declaration, was preceded by the singing of the Te Deum (with its appeal for God to save, lift up and govern his people) and was

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<sup>67</sup> True and exact relation ... entrance into Exeter

<sup>68</sup> White is a common symbol of purity in scripture. II Chronicles, 5:12; Daniel 12:10; Matthew 17:2, 28:3; Mark 16:5

<sup>69</sup> True and exact account ... entrance into Exeter.

<sup>70</sup> For such a story see [Nathaniel Salmon], The lives of the English bishops from the Restauration to the Revolution, (London, 1731), p.229. [Edward Bohun], History ... desertion, p.41 confirms, from a Williamite source, the need to use threats in Exeter to get prayers changed.

succeeded by the prayer for the expedition.<sup>71</sup> Burnet also preached in the Cathedral on William's first Sunday in Exeter. Although this address, like that at the Hague, has not survived, its text, from the last verse of Psalm 107, might indicate it was an exposition of Williamite reformation.<sup>72</sup> The psalm called for repentance from the Jews as a response to God's deliverance. This suggests that Burnet encouraged the English to see themselves as a people divinely protected by William's arrival, who must amend their lives in gratitude. Contemporary accounts of the sermon certainly suggest it had a strongly providential theme.<sup>73</sup> Thus, in Exeter, the Prince's legal arguments were placed firmly in the context of reformation and God's supernatural mercy to the English.<sup>74</sup>

The language of reformation was again prominent as William moved on from Exeter. On the march east, Burnet accompanied William, and was noted both for his vehement promotion of the Prince's claims and his hostility to Jacobite prayers.<sup>75</sup> Williamite publications, which reported their hero's advance, presented his army as living up to the highest ideals of reformed Christian behaviour. One spoke of the soldiers' "civil deportment, and their honesty of paying for what they have".<sup>76</sup> Meanwhile, William himself assiduously cultivated his image as a godly champion. He was careful to ensure the good behaviour of his troops, and told a crowd as he rode through Salisbury, "I am come to secure the

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<sup>71</sup> Expedition of the Prince, p.7. The 1662 prayer book translation of the Te Deum includes the lines "O Lord, save thy people: and bless thine heritage. / Govern them: and lift them up for ever."

<sup>72</sup> Notes and Queries, series 2 2, p.245.

<sup>73</sup> [Whittell], Exact diary, p.48. Expedition of the Prince, p.6.

<sup>74</sup> Another account of William's time in Exeter is provided by A letter from a gentleman in Exeter to his friend in London, (London, 1688).

<sup>75</sup> Singer, Correspondence ... Clarendon, vol.2, pp.214, 217, 227, 242.

<sup>76</sup> A further account of the Prince's army, in a letter from Exon. Novemb.24, printed in Complete collection of papers, part 3, pp.8-9.

Protestant religion, and to free you from popery".<sup>77</sup> An extraordinary account of the Prince's meeting with deserting commanders from James' army even cast him as the biblical David. At Sherbourne, he was described greeting men including Lord Churchill, and Prince George of Denmark, with David's salutations at the moment he was acclaimed King. In one of the most unlikely reports on the whole expedition, William is supposed to have asked that his heart be knit with those of the commanders. They promptly replied, "Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse".<sup>78</sup> Despite this somewhat absurd scene, such Davidic imagery was to play a large part in the Williamite campaign.<sup>79</sup> It provided a powerful icon of godly, monarchical rule, associating the Prince with a figure who had overcome the backsliding regime of his predecessor, and gained the Jewish throne to govern in the fear of God. David's reign, the moment when the first Jerusalem had been founded, symbolised the millennial society achievable under the new righteous magistrate.

Curiously, this element of reformation rhetoric was closely modelled on the propaganda Charles II had used at the Restoration. In 1660 writers in the Caroline cause had built up their leader as a modern David to assert his legitimacy over the regicide regime.<sup>80</sup> A memorandum Burnet sent to William in 1688 reveals that the chaplain had his eyes on this earlier polemic and recommended that elements of

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<sup>77</sup> Singer, Correspondence ... Clarendon, vol.2, p.215. For more on William's time in Salisbury, see, Great news from Salisbury, (London, 1688).

William's own efforts for an ordered army are recorded in Burnet, History ... own times, vol.3, p.331 - the Prince told Burnet to ensure the army in Exeter did no damage to property and paid all bills; and [Whittell], Exact diary, p.46, which claimed the troops in Exeter were "freer from debauched and disorderly persons" than any army before.

<sup>78</sup> Expedition of the Prince, pp.7-8. The original scene is I Chronicles, 12:17-18.

<sup>79</sup> The St James' sermon had developed such imagery to great effect, Burnet, Sermon ... St James ... 23rd December 1688, pp.8-9.

<sup>80</sup> See Michael McKeon, Politics and poetry in Restoration England: the case of Dryden's "Annus mirabilis", (London, 1975), pp.232, 236.



Charles' campaign be repeated now.<sup>81</sup> In the light of the debaucheries of Charles' reign, re-running such material risked the cynicism of its audience. Yet Burnet was obviously impressed by the earlier propaganda's impact, and clearly felt he could develop a clear enough account of what had gone wrong after 1660 to present William as the true David after the Restoration's false dawn.

Burnet's memorandum repays closer study. It was written in early December 1688, just before William entered London. The Prince's entry to the capital was a moment of acute ideological danger for the Orange camp. This was, arguably, the point at which William moved most obviously beyond his initial constitutional claims. His arrival at the national centre of power, with a large army and after his removal of the old King, effectively monopolised authority.<sup>82</sup> Burnet's memorandum was designed to balance this actual dominance, with an ideological claim to legitimacy expressed through the rhetoric of reformation. It reminded William of the symbolic importance of his actions and image, and suggested that, as soon as he was in control of the royal palaces, he put himself at the head of a campaign of moral purgation. Burnet wrote:

I humbly propose that, when the Lord Mayor and the Aldermen of London come to wait on the Prince, he may recommend to them the suppressing of vice and the excesses of drinking ... The first Proclamation that the late King [Charles II] sent out upon his restoration, was for the suppressing drunkenness and vice, which had a mighty effect on people's minds for a while, and made him looked upon as sent of God. This, expressed now, and pursued vigorously, will have a very good effect on people's minds.<sup>83</sup>

Burnet went on to advise that William attack vice in the army, remove scandalous ministers from the Church and be careful to promote an image

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<sup>81</sup> Blencowe, Diary ... times of Charles the Second, vol.2, p.287.

<sup>82</sup> Beddard, Kingdom without a King, pp.61-2, shows how William was able to assume the trappings of a royal court immediately on his arrival in London, despite the fact the legal King, James, was still in England at Rochester.

<sup>83</sup> Blencowe, Diary ... times of Charles the Second, vol.2, p.287. Charles II's proclamation was dated the 30th May 1660, and was his very first after his Restoration. See Robert Steele ed., Tudor and Stuart proclamations 1485-1714, 2 vols (Oxford, 1910), vol.1. p.386.

of personal piety. Not all of this advice was followed. In particular there was no immediate proclamation against vice. The next chapter, however, will show that Burnet's memorandum set the general tone of William's self-presentation throughout his reign. The Prince certainly expounded Burnet's message in his physical entry into London. On the 18th December, when he arrived at St. James', he indulged in a blaze of symbolic ceremonial which echoed his Exeter triumph.<sup>84</sup> William again wore white, a cloak of this colour being thrown over his shoulders as he drove through the park. His military commanders rode in coaches pulled by six white horses, and crowds cheered, as they had done from Exeter, that they would live and die Protestants. The effect was only spoiled by heavy rain, and the fact that most Londoners had gathered in the city streets, not realising that the Prince would go through the park to the palace.<sup>85</sup> William was also careful to publicise his piety during his early days in London. He attended several religious services - including the one at St. James' on the 23rd December, and one on the 30th December during which he listened to a sermon and heard prayers read by Burnet. On this second occasion he also took communion in a public enough manner that the city gentleman Richard Lapthorne could report that "His Highness received the sacrament from the bishop of London with an exemplary devotion."<sup>86</sup>

Reformation was again used in January. On the 31st, at the height of the Convention's rage, a public day of thanksgiving was held. This was to show the nation's gratitude "to Almighty God for having made His Highness the Prince of Orange, the glorious instrument of the great

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<sup>84</sup> A true account of the Prince of Orange's coming to St. James, on Tuesday the 18th of December 1688, about three of the clock in the afternoon, (London, 1688)

<sup>85</sup> Burnet, History ... own times vol.3, pp.358. Burnet seems to have been upset at this slip-up in public relations.

<sup>86</sup> Russell J.Kerr and Ida Coffin Duncan eds, The Routledge papers: being extracts from the letters of Richard Lapthorne, gent., of Hatton Garden, London to Richard Coffin, esq., of Routledge, Bideford, Devon, (London, 1928) p.57.

deliverance of this kingdom from popery and arbitrary power."<sup>87</sup> The historical record provides few clues as to who exactly promoted this occasion. However, there is strong circumstantial evidence that Burnet, or men close to him, encouraged it in order to boost William's image at a time when the Prince was unable to join in political discussions about his future. From what happened, it is clear that there must have been an organised effort to promote the thanksgiving, and to ensure its message was controlled by William's chaplain. When the idea was moved in the Upper House of the Convention - that body's first official action - the assembled Lords accepted it and chose William Lloyd, bishop of St. Asaph's, to preach to them on the coming occasion.<sup>88</sup> Lloyd was an old friend of Burnet's, who had become very close to him over the winter of 1688, and was actively drumming up support for the Prince of Orange.<sup>89</sup> After the Lords decision had been relayed to the Commons, the Lower House swiftly agreed to the thanksgiving, and chose as their preacher none other than Burnet himself.<sup>90</sup> When he went to the pulpit, the Prince's chaplain took the opportunity to repeat the message of the St James' address. He reminded his audience of William's importance in a divine scheme of reformation, and again argued that the invasion had been divinely promoted to end the debauchery and corruptions of the last two reigns. It had shown that God was willing to renew his

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<sup>87</sup> An order of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons assembled at Westminster in this present Convention for a publick thanksgiving, (London, 1688), dated the 22nd January.

<sup>88</sup> Journals ... House of Lords, vol.14, p.102.

<sup>89</sup> William Lloyd had a long history of anti-papal writing and had been one of the seven bishops prosecuted by James II for objecting to the Declaration of Indulgence. He persuaded clergymen to support William and collected stories to prove the evils of James II's court. Clarendon accused Lloyd of doing anything Burnet wanted in March of 1688/9, and Burnet urged Lloyd's early promotion in 1689. Dictionary of national biography, vol.11, p.1316; Clarke and Foxcroft, Life of Burnet, pp.254. Arthur T.Hart, William Lloyd, 1627-1717, (London, 1952). Singer, Correspondence ... Clarendon, vol.2, pp.226-7. Burnet once wrote that Lloyd had criticised his History of the Reformation so closely before publication that it was almost his own work - Gilbert Burnet, A letter writ by the Lord bishop of Salisbury, to the Lord bishop of Coventry and Litchfield, (London, 1693), pp.2-3.

<sup>90</sup> Journals ... House of Commons, vol.10, pp.11-2.



protection of the England's godly nation; and that the people must now respond to the gift of the Prince by following his reforming lead.<sup>91</sup>

This thanksgiving is important because it allowed Burnet to engage in a mass publicity exercise. The event was designed to bring the Williamite message to the whole English population. Up to the end of January, Orange propaganda had relied on published descriptions of the Prince's words and actions. It had, therefore, been limited to those with access to printed literature. The thanksgiving, by contrast, attempted to ensure that all Englishmen heard a legitimation of recent events. The order from the Lords which established the event urged every Londoner into his local church on the 31st, where they were to hear a special religious service.<sup>92</sup> This act of worship was to include a sermon from the local minister on the theme of deliverance, and a form of prayer specially composed for the occasion.<sup>93</sup> These supplications put William's actions in a Burnetine context, replacing the collect for the day with one thanking God for protecting the Protestant religion through the ages. The special collect blamed the ravages of James' reign on national sin, and viewed William's invasion as a divine event, heralding a new age. God had "raised up for us a mighty deliverer" and caused "light to spring out of darkness". Other parts of the prayers suggested that the work of reformation was to continue, and that William would need to be in England to see it through.

Go on to perfect, O Gracious God, the Work that Thou hast begun among us. Bless and prosper the Hands, by which Thou hast conveyed this Mercy to us. Direct our Governors with the Spirit of Wisdom and Righteousness, Rule Thou in the

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<sup>91</sup> Gilbert Burnet, A sermon preached before the House of Commons on 31st January 1688, being the thanksgiving-day for the deliverance of this kingdom from popery and arbitrary power, (London, 1689), especially pp.29, 32-3. William Lloyd did not deliver his sermon, as he was ill.

<sup>92</sup> Order of the Lords.

<sup>93</sup> A form of prayer and thanksgiving to almighty God for having made His Highness the Prince of Orange the glorious instrument of the great deliverance of the kingdom from popery and arbitrary power, ([London], 1688) This had been ordered by the Lords and sent to a committee of bishops for composition. Journals ... House of Lords, vol.14, p.102.

Evelyn reported the sermon he heard at St.Martin's in the Fields in his diary - de Beer, Kalendarium, vol.4, p.621.

the Spirit of Wisdom and Righteousness, Rule Thou in the midst of our Publick Councils.

Men and women in the provinces were to go to church for the thanksgiving on the 14th February, two weeks after London.<sup>94</sup> The fortnight's delay gave areas outside the capital time to plan the day, and for news of what had been preached in the capital to spread.<sup>95</sup> Where the provincial sermons have survived by being published, they seem to have echoed the themes of Burnet's address. They promoted reformation as a necessary response to deliverance, and portrayed the Prince as the only possible leader of this purgation. John Ollyffe, preaching in Almer, Dorset, talked of the desperate need, after a deliverance, to join the renewal promoted by William.

Our chief Work is yet to come. And that is, that we labour for a thorow and National Reformation, which though we that are in private Capacities cannot do much, yet we should labour to do what we can; ... And what we cannot of our selves, let us help by devout and earnest Prayers at the Throne of Grace, that Holiness beginning at the Throne, may flow down through all the Channels of Office and Magistracy to the meanest Persons of the Land.<sup>96</sup>

Similarly, John Flavell, a Devonshire divine, told his audience that "a national reformation is now expected by the Lord," and that William was "a second Hezekiah", "a great example of virtue, to correct thy lewdness."<sup>97</sup>

The language of reformation had thus given the Orange camp a penetrating voice, even at its most difficult moments. As has been shown, the Declaration forced the Prince into silence on constitutional

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<sup>94</sup> Order of the Lords.

<sup>95</sup> The Harley family correspondence shows that at least as far away as rural Herefordshire, services were organised and attended, see Historical Manuscripts Commission, Report on the manuscripts of the His Grace the Duke of Portland, preserved at Wellbeck Abbey, 5 vols (London, 1894), vol.3, p.428 - Robert Harley to Sir Edward Harley 14th February, 1688/9: "this day was solemnly observed here with a very great congregation and a very excellent sermon".

<sup>96</sup> John Ollyffe, England's call to thankfulness for her great deliverance ... in a sermon preach'd in the church of Almer in Dorsetshire on Feb 14 1688/9, (London, 1689), p.30.

<sup>97</sup> [John Flavell], Mount Pisgah: a sermon preached at the publick thanksgiving Febr. 14, 1688/9., (London, 1689), pp.23, 46, 24. For Hezekiah's virtuous reign, see II Chronicles, 29-31.

issues over the winter of 1688/9, just when he wanted to make out a case for his kingship. Burnet's ideology filled this ideological void. By the early spring it had taken over from the original manifesto as the rhetoric which encouraged the Prince's promotion, and prepared the nation for its new ruler.

### III

The final triumph of reformation within Williamite propaganda came once the Prince had become King. Burnet's moral arguments gained strength after this had happened, because, unlike the constitutional case contained in the Declaration, they proved equally well adapted to defending a court as defeating one. Because it was based on the ideal of godly rule and magistracy, the language of reformation could survive the shift from opposition to government. As the line pursued in the October manifesto was recognised as a threat to the new ruler's prerogative, and was abandoned, the case contained in Burnet's sermons proved capable of supporting executive power, and was elaborated. To see this one need look no further than the coronation of William and Mary on 11th April.

The 1689 coronation has been the subject of recent historical study. Both Carolyn Edie and Lois Schwoerer have described the ceremony, and have outlined its role in establishing an image of the new monarchy. Schwoerer concentrated on the new coronation oath taken by William in Westminster Abbey. This, she argued, performed the delicate task of appearing to preserve the old forms of royal authority, whilst actually making concessions to the men who had pushed the Declaration of Rights.<sup>98</sup> Edie studied the coronation medals and the sermon preached during the ceremony. Both these, she believed served as expositions of the legal principles the Revolution was held to represent.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Lois G. Schwoerer, "The coronation of William and Mary, April 11th, 1689", in Schwoerer, Revolution of 1688/9, pp.107-130.

<sup>99</sup> Carolyn A. Edie, "The public face of royal ritual: sermons, medals and civic ceremony in later Stuart coronations", Huntingdon Library Quarterly, 53 (1990), pp.311-336, especially p.322.



This work is valuable, but it again stresses constitutional rhetoric (which had become a threatening embarrassment to William), at the expense of the much more useful reformation message. Schwoerer's work on the oath, for instance, ultimately demonstrated William's weakness in controlling propaganda. She showed that the duty of preparing this vital public statement passed to a committee of independently minded MPs, who were suspicious of the new King, and wished to make the limitations on his power explicit.<sup>100</sup> By contrast, the historian underplayed those parts of the ceremonial which propagated a reformation message, and used it to underline William's authority. Whilst, for instance, Schwoerer noted that the bible played a novel role in the coronation, she did not provide a full analysis of its possible significance. In her work on the new rite (in which a impressive volume of scripture was presented to the King and Queen with the request that they make it their rule of life and government), Schwoerer interpreted the ceremony simply as a confirmation of the Protestantism of the new regime.<sup>101</sup> This was an important observation, but it failed to bring out the possibility that the presentation was part of an ongoing attempt to portray William as a powerful reforming magistrate. The offer of the bible, linked to the suggestion that the King accept it as his guide, may have been intended to boost royal authority by reminding its audience of Hebrew rulers. The ideal model of kingship contained in scripture was that of David, Solomon and Josiah. These were potent figures, who had used the divinely-bestowed majesty to lead their people to righteousness. The ceremony in the Abbey, therefore, may have been intended to cast William's monarchy in

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<sup>100</sup> Schwoerer, "Coronation", p.118. Schwoerer claimed that William's lost control over the constitutional meaning of public ceremonial to a group of radical parliamentarians in mid February, when he was offered the crown, see Lois G.Schwoerer, "The Glorious Revolution as spectacle: a new perspective", in Stephen B.Baxter ed., England's rise to greatness, 1660-1763, (LA, 1983), pp.109-49.

<sup>101</sup> Schwoerer, "Coronation", p.115; For other accounts of the ceremony, see An account of the ceremonial at the coronation of their excellent Majesties King William and Queen Mary, (London, 1689), and Hester W.Chapman, Mary II, Queen of England, (Bath, 1972), pp.171

an Old Testament mould, and so stress his God-given influence over polity and society.<sup>102</sup>

A similar message was carried by Burnet's coronation sermon. Some of this address dealt, as Caroline Edie noted, with the constitution. Burnet took just government as his theme and reminded men how it could be subverted. Justice, he said, could only be maintained when monarchs were

not breaking through the Limits of their Power, nor invading the Rights of their People; neither inventing new Pretensions of Prerogative, nor stretching those that do belong to them, to the Ruine of their Subjects.<sup>103</sup>

However, this argument was not to be the meat of the sermon. Despite the echoes of William's Declaration in the early passages of the address, Burnet was not concerned to develop a legal case. He did not apply his definition of just rule to explain exactly how James had forfeited the throne, not did he provide any concrete descriptions of the bounds of English prerogative. Instead, Burnet quickly developed a much wider definition of justice. Really just government, the preacher stated, involved more than constitutional correctness. It meant taking the fear of God as the rule for the exercise of authority.<sup>104</sup> This echoed the message of the bible ceremony, and explained that real righteousness went far beyond mere obedience to national law. True justice meant the encouragement of godly religion and morality implied by the ideal of reformation.

When the encouraging and promoting of a vigorous Piety, and sublime Vertue, and the maintaining and propagating of True Religion ... is the chief design of their Rule: When Impiety and Vice are punished, and Error is repressed ... : When the decency of the Worship of God is kept up, without adulterating it with Superstition: When Order is carried on in the Church of God, without Tyranny: And above all, when Princes are in their own deportment, Examples of the Fear of God, but without Affectation; and when it is visible that they honour those that fear the Lord, and that vile

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<sup>102</sup> For the use of Old Testament scripture by English Protestants to boost royal authority, see Richard Rex, Henry VIII and the English Reformation, (London, 1993), chapter 1.

<sup>103</sup> Gilbert Burnet, A sermon preached at the coronation of William III and Mary II, King and Queen ... in the Abby-Church of Westminster, April 11th, 1689, (London, 1689), p.11.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid. p.17.

men are despised by them, then do they truly Rule in the  
Fear of God.<sup>104</sup>

The explanation for Burnet's change of tack lies in continuing nervousness about constitutionalism in the Orange camp. Defining English fundamental law too closely at the coronation would risk re-opening the disagreements of January and February, and encourage unwelcome investigation into the monarch's legal position. To avoid this danger, Burnet chose a reformation idiom which enabled him to preach up the new court's power. The position the cleric adopted allowed him to suggest that since justice was secured more by righteousness than by limitation of the prerogative, a monarch willing to rule in the fear of God should be allowed to retain his influence. Following this line, Burnet turned his coronation address into a hymn to godly magistracy; a song of praise for what monarchical power could achieve. National reformation, he argued, would begin at court, and would be effected by William's sway over his subjects. "King's examples", he pointed out, "have an efficacy which few can resist."<sup>105</sup> William, he suggested, would play the same role as the Emperor Hadrian after the debauchery of Nero and Caligula. He would change the whole tone of society and restore ancient virtues.<sup>106</sup> At his most impassioned, the preacher engaged in what might be called centripetal millenarianism.<sup>107</sup> He presented royal power as a vital element in God's providential plan for the world. In a glorification of the court, the King's authority was portrayed as the necessary stimulus to Christ's reign on earth.

When we see Kings become ... truly Christian Philosophers,  
then we may expect to see the City of God, the New  
Jerusalem, quickly come down from Heaven to settle among  
us.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid. p.19-20.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid. p.20.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid. p.24.

<sup>107</sup> For an explanation of this term, and an exploration of the concept in the early Stuart era, see Lamont, Godly rule, pp.28-55.

<sup>108</sup> Gilbert Burnet, Sermon ... coronation ... 11th April 1689, p.20.



In such passages Orange reformation demonstrated its impressiveness as a executive rhetoric. The coronation, in fact, marks the point at which "Williamite" reformation was transformed into "courtly" reformation. Instead of undermining the old authority of James, Burnet's ideas were now used to support the new authority of William. The capacity of the rhetoric to buttress the personal power of the new King had been developed, and the propaganda was ready to take its place as an official language of government.

#### IV

The coronation ceremony was well received and set the tone for much Williamite propaganda in the last decade of the seventeenth century.<sup>109</sup> The effort which had characterised Burnet's publicity campaign for the Prince of Orange was to be sustained through the 1690s. The rhetoric of courtly reformation was to remain the linchpin of the Orange case through the Nine Years War and on into the troubled years at the end of William's reign.

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<sup>109</sup> The sermon was received with wild applause, de Beer, Kalendarium, vol.4, p.632.

## Chapter Three

### The Court's Campaign for Reformation

#### I

In 1952 Dudley Bahlmann published a work which pioneered the study of reformation in the 1690s. In his Moral revolution of 1688, he chronicled a great wave of concern about English morals which overcame writers, politicians and projectors at the end of the seventeenth century.<sup>1</sup> Bahlmann explained this moral revolution with reference to the political Revolution which had preceded it. He suggested the whole reformation phenomenon had been encouraged by the belief that William and Mary's reign would give an opportunity for renewal after the debauched and popish regimes of its predecessors. Bahlmann thus presented reform in the 1690s as an essentially "Williamite" movement.

Since Bahlmann wrote, his vision has disintegrated somewhat. Intense historical interest in the reformation initiatives of the late Stuart era has uncovered much complexity and ambiguity which has cast considerable doubt on their Williamite, or "court", political outlook. The 1690s concern with morals has been revealed as a diverse phenomenon, managed by very different groups of people, not all of whom were uncritical, or unconditional, supporters of the King. Some of the reformers, for instance, seem to have come into direct conflict with organs of William's government. A.G.Craig's study of the societies for reformation of manners showed that these bodies caused considerable trouble for the Lords Commissioners of the Great Seal in 1691, and were suspected by one of the Secretaries of State later in the decade.<sup>2</sup> Robert Shoemaker has similarly shown how the methods used by certain local magistrates to prosecute vice met with the disapproval of

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<sup>1</sup> Bahlmann, Moral revolution of 1688.

<sup>2</sup> A.G.Craig, "The movement for the reformation of manners 1690-1715", (Edinburgh PhD, 1980), pp.41-63. For Secretary of State Vernon's suspicions see G.P.R.James ed., Letters illustrative of the reign of William III from 1696 to 1708 addressed to the Duke of Shrewsbury by James Vernon Esq., 3 vols. (London, 1814), vol.2, pp.128-9.

national judicial officers.<sup>3</sup> In fact, certain parts of the reformation movement have come to be interpreted as expressions of dissatisfaction with the world William's invasion had created. Craig Rose has recently re-analyzed the charity school movement of the late 1690s as an attempt by the Anglican Church to recover ground lost to dissent in the religious settlement of 1689.<sup>4</sup> Tina Isaacs has also uncovered a strand of Anglican reformism, critical of the religious pluralism and Erastianism of post-Revolution England.<sup>5</sup> On slightly different tacks, David Hayton has argued for a link amongst MPs between enthusiasm for moral reform and suspicion of the government; and Shelley Burt has suggested that the reformers received little support from the King's administration.<sup>6</sup>

However, despite the quality of much of this recent work, it has undervalued the court face of reform. The historiography has rejected Bahlmann's insight, because it has concentrated on those parts of the reformation phenomenon whose instigators came from outside the regime's ambit. There has, for example, been ample study of campaigns to enforce the laws against vice.<sup>7</sup> This was an area in which independent gentlemen

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<sup>3</sup> Robert B. Shoemaker, Prosecution and punishment: petty crime in London and rural Middlesex c.1660-1725, (Cambridge, 1991), pp.261-2. This shows Lord Chief Justice Holt's worries about the legality of a campaign by JP Ralph Hartley in Middlesex in the early 1690s.

<sup>4</sup> Rose, "Politics, religion and charity", pp.98-133. See also Craig Rose, "London's charity schools, 1690-1730", History Today, 40 (1990), March number, pp.17-24, especially p.18.

<sup>5</sup> Tina Isaacs, "The Anglican hierarchy and the reformation of manners, 1688-1738", Journal of Ecclesiastical History, 33 (1982), pp.391-411, especially pp.400-404.

<sup>6</sup> David Hayton, "Sir Richard Cocks: the anatomy of a country Whig", Albion, 20 (1988), pp.221-246; David Hayton, "Moral reform and country politics in the late seventeenth-century House of Commons", Past and Present, 128 (1990), pp.48-91; Shelley Burt, Virtue transformed: political argument in England, 1688-1740, (Cambridge, 1992), pp.24-7, argues the reform initiatives of the 1690s failed because they had no government support.

<sup>7</sup> The societies for reformation of manners have been studied in Bahlmann, Moral Revolution; Craig, "Reformation of manners"; Tina Isaacs, "Moral crime, moral reform and the state: a study in piety and politics in early eighteenth-century England", (Rochester NY PhD, 1979); T.C.Curtis and W.A.Speck, "The societies for reformation of manners: a case study in the theory and practice of moral reform", Literature and History, 3 (1976), pp.45-64.



and local magistrates took the lead.<sup>8</sup> Some attention has also been paid to reforming institutions such as hospitals, workhouses, charity schools and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.<sup>9</sup> To a large extent these were founded and sustained by voluntary and neighbourhood initiative.<sup>10</sup> In comparison, other parts of the reformation phenomenon have suffered neglect.<sup>11</sup> There has been very little study, for example, of public fasting, of attempts to use the Church as an instrument of social godliness, or of the production of spiritual literature. When these other aspects are brought into the picture, and the whole range of initiatives examined, the "regime" nature of reformation becomes much more obvious. Throughout the decade, many of the most significant moves for national renewal were made by members of the executive, or at least by a group of clerics close to the King. These men were explicitly courtly reformers, who placed their actions in a Williamite context. They stressed that the change of ruler at the Revolution had inspired their efforts and that the new monarchs' support was the cornerstone of their movement.

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<sup>8</sup> See Robert B. Shoemaker, "Reforming the city: the reformation of manners campaign in London, 1690-1738" in Lee Davison, Tim Hitchcock, Tim Kearns and Robert Shoemaker eds, Stilling the grumbling hive: the response to social and economic problems in England 1689-1750, (London, 1992), pp.99-120. This argues strongly for the importance of local pressure in the initiative for moral reform in the capital.

<sup>9</sup> For charity schools see Rose, "Politics, religion and charity", p.89-133. For workhouses, *ibid.* pp.48-50. For more on workhouses, hospitals, and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), see Tim Hitchcock, "Paupers and preachers: the SPCK and the parochial workhouse movement", and Mary Fissell, "Charity universal? Institutions and moral reform in eighteenth-century Bristol" in Davison et al eds., Stilling the grumbling hive, pp.145-166, 121-44; Rose, "Politics, religion and charity", pp.64-89; W.K. Lowther Clark, A history of the SPCK, (London, 1959).

<sup>10</sup> Tim Hitchcock has also argued for a European pietist momentum, operating across the English Channel, but not via the central institutions of the English state. See "Parliament and the second European reformation", (unpublished seminar paper, to be published in a forthcoming volume of Parliamentary history).

<sup>11</sup> A broader than usual vision of spiritual renewal in the latter half of the seventeenth century can be found in Eamon Duffy, "Primitive Christianity revived: religious renewal in Augustan England", in Derek Baker ed., Renaissance and renewal in Christian history, Studies in Church history 14 (Oxford, 1977), pp.287-300. However, the main concern of this article when covering the 1690s was still the societies for reformation of manners.

## II

Before the campaign of courtly reformation in the 1690s is described, it will be useful to review the machinery of propaganda which promoted it. The starting point here must be an examination of the men who organised the regime's moral crusade. The best clue to the identity of the court's reformers was contained in the paper Burnet sent to William in December 1688.<sup>12</sup> As well as suggesting that William initiate an amendment of the capital's manners, this memoranda recommended a batch of the city's clergy, whom the Prince might consider for preferment. John Tillotson, the Dean of Canterbury and a preacher at Lincoln's Inn, was mentioned; along with Simon Patrick, the Dean of St Paul's. Also on the list were Edward Fowler, the rector of St. Giles, Cripplegate; Thomas Tenison, the minister at St. Martin's in the Fields; John Sharp of St. Giles; Edward Stillingfleet; William Wake; and Anthony Horneck, the charismatic preacher at the Savoy.<sup>13</sup>

There are good reasons for believing that Burnet was trying to bolster William's propaganda machine as he made these recommendations. First, the chaplain made much of the clergy's polemical abilities as he promoted them. The December paper dwelt upon the communication skills of its subjects, and stressed their success in attracting the population's support. It described Patrick as a "great" preacher; informed William that Horneck was a pious preacher, with a huge personal following; and puffed Wake as "the most popular divine now in England", the force of whose writing was "amazing".<sup>14</sup>

Second, the men listed in December were Burnet's ideological allies. Not only were they old personal friends, who had helped him compile the History of the Reformation; they had also had careers in press, parish and pulpit which suggested they might concur with the

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<sup>12</sup> For discussion of this paper, see above, chapter 2, section II.

<sup>13</sup> Blencowe ed., Diary ... times of Charles the Second, vol.2, pp.281-286.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. pp.281-5.

notion of Williamite reform.<sup>15</sup> Amongst the works published by Burnet's clergy before 1688, two genres of literature stood out. One was anti-Catholic polemic. The men recommended to William had been some of the foremost Protestant writers of the 1670s and '80s, whose activities had reached a fever pitch under James.<sup>16</sup> The other speciality of Burnet's clergy had been English jeremiads. Particularly in their sermons in the late 1670s, the men listed in 1688 had analyzed England as a nation falling deeper and deeper into sin.<sup>17</sup> As Simon Patrick had put it, the English loved "nothing but merriment and jollity, feasting and dancing, balls and plays".<sup>18</sup> These two forms of literature were linked. Their authors blamed Catholics for the moral temptations to which England had succumbed. They saw popish conspiracy behind depravity, and feared a plot to weaken England's attachment to the godly cause. Edward Stillingfleet, addressing the House of Commons in 1678, spoke for all Burnet's clergy when worrying that popery would come in "at the back

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<sup>15</sup> Burnet, History of the Reformation, vol.1, pp.7-8, and vol.2, pp.3-4, gave Burnet's thanks to Stillingfleet and Tillotson for helping him with research for the book and reading it prior to publication. Clarke and Foxcroft, Life of Burnet, pp. 143-44, tells of Burnet's close personal contact with the London clergy in the 1670s.

<sup>16</sup> Gilbert Burnet, History ... own Times, vol.3, pp.105-6, talks of a concerted effort amongst Anglican clergy to publish against popery, organised by Tillotson, Stillingfleet, Tenison and Patrick. Wake took a great part, collecting the clergy's efforts in The present state of the controversy between the Church of England and the Church of Rome, (London, 1687), and A continuation of the present state of the controversy, (London, 1688). For Wake's personal efforts against Catholic theology throughout the Restoration period see, Norman Sykes, William Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1657-1737, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1957), vol.1, pp.17-43. See also, amongst a vast collection of anti-popish writing in the 1680s, [John Tillotson], The hazard of being saved in the Church of Rome, (London, 1686); [Edward Stillingfleet], The Council of Trent examined and disproved by Catholic tradition, (London, 1687); [Simon Patrick], A discourse about tradition, (London, 1687).

<sup>17</sup> See for example, John Sharp, A sermon preached on the day of the publick fast, April 11th, 1679 at St. Margaret's Westminster, before the Honourable House of Commons, (London, 1679); Simon Patrick, A sermon preach'd at St. Paul's Covent Garden, on the day of fasting and prayer Novemb. 13th, 1678, (London, 1678).

<sup>18</sup> Simon Patrick, Angliae speculum: a glass that flatters not; presented to a country congregation at the late solemn fast, April 24th, 1678, (London, 1678), pp.7-8.



door" of profanity.<sup>19</sup> Echoing the other London ministers, he called for a concerted amendment of morals as the only means of averting the Roman danger. Obviously, such a philosophy brought the men Burnet listed in 1688 close to the position of their sponsor. Their hatred of popery amounted to the same "two Church" vision which Burnet espoused during William's invasion, and their calls for national repentance anticipated the rhetoric of the Orange camp. The parallel between Williamite ideology and the personal beliefs of the men mentioned in December was strengthened by the London clergy's pastoral work. Whilst working in the capital in the 1670s and '80s, these men had participated in a spiritual and ecclesiastical revival, which the modern Church historian, Gordon Rupp, has labelled the "small awakening".<sup>20</sup> Possibly inspired by frequent meetings in one another's houses, the London clergy had initiated a drive to improve the quality of religious life in the city. They had developed a pastoral style of intense personal care, which had concentrated upon catchetising, frequent public worship, and the establishment of parochial schools, libraries and religious societies. Above all else, the awakening had emphasised the defeat of corrupt Catholicism through the reformation of manners. Preaching, prayers, education, preparation for communion, and the spiritual exercises of the societies, had all been intended to foster an awareness of popish sin, and promote general repentance.<sup>21</sup> Thus in

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<sup>19</sup> Edward Stillingfleet, A sermon preached on the fast day, November 13th, 1678, at St. Margaret's, Westminster before the Honourable House of Commons, 2nd edition (London, 1678), p.47.

<sup>20</sup> Gordon Rupp, Religion in England 1688-1791, (Oxford, 1985), pp.40-51.

<sup>21</sup> For post-Revolution comment on some of this activity in London, see Josiah Woodward, An account of the rise and progress of the religious societies, (London, 1701), Richard Kidder, "The life of Anthony Horneck", preface to Anthony Horneck, Several sermons on the fifth of St Matthew, 2nd edition (London, 1706); Gilbert Burnet, History ... own times, vol.4, p.18. Gilbert Burnet, A sermon preached at the funeral of the Most Reverend Father in God, John ... Lord archbishop of Canterbury, (London, 1694); John Sharp, A sermon preached on 28th June at St.Giles in the Fields ... at his leaving the parish, (London, 1691)

For more recent accounts, see Gordon Rupp, Religion in England, pp. 40-51; Edward Carpenter, The Protestant bishop: the life of Henry Compton, bishop of London, (London, 1956), pp.208-232; Edward Carpenter, Thomas Tenison, archbishop of Canterbury, his life and times, (London, 1948), pp.16-30; Arthur Tindal Hart, The life and times

their actions, as well as in their words, the men of Burnet's list had suggested themselves as exponents of Williamite reformation. Whilst their publications had shown they agreed with the moral pathology of England offered by Orange spokesmen, their work as ministers indicated that they might contribute to the proposed cure.

If Burnet was indeed trying to recruit his London clerics as reformation publicists in December 1688, he succeeded. Contrary to the account of their careers given by G.V.Bennett (who dated their association with the new court no sooner than the late spring of 1689), the men Burnet's list entered into a close alliance with William from his very first days in England.<sup>22</sup> Although some of the group had initial doubts about the Revolution, most quickly lent their services to the Orange party.<sup>23</sup> From the start, they visited the Prince, and used their good offices to try to win over key political figures to his cause. Tillotson helped to convince William's sister-in-law, Princess Anne, not to make damaging claims over the succession, whilst Tenison worked on the archbishop of Canterbury, William Sancroft, to stop distancing

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of John Sharp, archbishop of York, (London, 1956), pp.62-81; J. Van de Berg, "Between Platonism and Enlightenment: Simon Patrick, 1625-1707, and his place in the latitudinarian movement", Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis, 68 (1988), pp.169-180, especially p.174.

For charity schools see M.G.Jones, The charity school movement: a study of eighteenth century puritanism in action, (Cambridge, 1983). For religious societies, see Henry D.Rack, "Religious societies and the origins of Methodism", Journal of Ecclesiastical History, 38 (1987), pp.582-595; Duffy, "Primitive Christianity revived"; Lowther Clark, History of the SPCK, pp.2-3.

<sup>22</sup> G.V.Bennett, "King William III and the episcopate", in G.V.Bennett and J.D.Walsh eds, Essays in modern English Church history, (London, 1966), pp.104-132

<sup>23</sup> The most notable doubter was John Sharp, who caused offence on the 30th January, 1688/9 when preaching to the Commons, by offering prayers to James, and reflecting on the immorality of deposing monarchs. See Thomas Sharp, A life of John Sharp, DD Lord archbishop of York, 2 vols. (London, 1825), vol.1, pp.99-102. Sharp's actions were probably caused less by horror of the Revolution, than by the fact that the Convention had not yet agreed that the throne was vacant (so it could be argued that James was still in it), and by the fact that the 30th January was the fast day for the killing of Charles I in 1649. Sharp did not question the Revolution after this incident.

himself from England's deliverer.<sup>24</sup> The clerics also lent their rhetorical skills to the Prince. They preached to his entourage at St. James', and promoting him to a wider public. Tillotson, for instance, addressed William as early as the 6th January, whilst Simon Patrick first preached at the palace two weeks later.<sup>25</sup> These two men went on to join in the thanksgiving propaganda of the 31st January. From their prestigious pulpits in St. Paul's, Covent Garden, and Lincoln's Inn, they delivered sermons, (soon published) which rejoiced that William's invasion had made possible the reformation for which they had long called.<sup>26</sup>

In return for these services, William showed Burnet's men considerable favour. He promoted them, brought them into his circle, and gave them ample opportunity to propagate their message. On the 22nd January 1688/9, when Patrick went to speak at St. James', William revealed he was aware of the men Burnet had recommended and announced his intension to work with them. He told Patrick he had heard of him before and that he "was glad to hear" him preach.<sup>27</sup> He went on to state that he had

always had a great esteem for the Clergy of London, and a value for the service they have done religion; and will take care they shall live at ease.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Edward Gregg, Queen Anne, (London, 1980), p.70. Sarah Churchill, An account of the conduct of the dowager Duchess of Marlborough, (London, 1742), pp.23-4. Simon Patrick, The autobiography of Symon Patrick, bishop of Ely, (Oxford, 1839), p.140.

<sup>25</sup> Thomas Birch, The life of the most reverend Dr. John Tillotson, Lord archbishop of Canterbury, copied chiefly from his original papers and letters, (London, 1752), p.143; Patrick, Autobiography, p.142.

<sup>26</sup> John Tillotson, A sermon preach'd at Lincoln's Inn chappel on 31st January 1688, being the day appointed for a public thanksgiving, (London, 1689); Simon Patrick, A sermon preached at St. Paul's Covent Garden on 31st January 1688 being the thanksgiving day for the deliverance of the kingdom, (London, 1689); Patrick, Autobiography, pp.142-3, states that Tillotson published his sermon to support that of his friend.

Patrick followed up his effort with a sermon denouncing those who objected to the Revolution - Simon Patrick, A sermon against murmuring preached at St. Paul's Covent-Garden, on the fifth Sunday in Lent, March 17, 1688/9, (London, 1689).

<sup>27</sup> Patrick, Autobiography, pp.142.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. pp.143.



Promotions from these men began the same day.<sup>29</sup> Over the next couple of years, William accelerated the careers of most of those who had been recommended in 1688, building up a corp of clerics closely tied to the new regime. On his accession to the throne, the Prince appointed Burnet Clerk of the Closet. This was a high office which brought the chaplain influence over patronage, and in which he would be succeeded by Tillotson in April 1689.<sup>30</sup> In the summer of William's first year, the King granted still more prestigious plums, moving the Burnetine clergy into the bishoprics he had found vacant on his elevation. He installed Burnet as bishop of Salisbury, made Edward Stillingfleet bishop of Worcester, and sent Simon Patrick to the diocese of Chichester. In the same period, John Tillotson was advanced to the Deanery of St. Paul's, and John Sharp was sent to replace him as Dean of Canterbury. When, early in 1690, Archbishop Sancroft, and some of his episcopal colleagues, refused to take the oaths to the new monarchs, William got a further opportunity to show his favour.<sup>31</sup> He proposed to deprive these non-jurors, and fill their sees with the men of Burnet's list. Despite some reluctance on the part of the clergy concerned to displace erstwhile colleagues, the King eventually persuaded Tillotson to go to Canterbury to replace Sancroft; ordered Patrick to be translated to Ely, where the old bishop Turner had been deprived; and sent Edward Fowler to Gloucester, where Robert Frampton had been ejected.<sup>32</sup> John Sharp's implacable refusal to step into the shoes of a deprived colleague was overcome by offering him the archdiocese of York, whose

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<sup>29</sup> Wake and Horneck joined Burnet as chaplains to the Prince, Narcissus Luttrell, A brief historical relation of state affairs from September 1678 to April 1714, 6 vols (Oxford, 1857), vol.1, p.497.

<sup>30</sup> See John Bickersteth, The Clerks of the Closet in the royal household: five hundred years of service to the crown, (Stroud, 1991), pp.35-41.

<sup>31</sup> The history which led up to the old bishops' refusal to work with the new regime is considered in G.V.Bennett, "The seven bishops: a reconsideration", in Derek Baker ed., Religious motivation, Studies in Church history 15 (Oxford, 1978), pp.267-87.

<sup>32</sup> Tillotson's reluctance to take the archbishopric, first mooted to him by the King in 1689, is illustrated in a series of letters to Lady Rachel Russell, see British Library Additional Ms. 4236, ff.293-4 - letter of the 19th September 1689; f.32 - letter of the 25th November 1690.

metropolitan, Lamplugh, had died.<sup>33</sup> By the time Thomas Tenison was promoted to Lincoln in 1691/2, the men of Burnet's list were dominating the episcopal bench. They had secured the most illustrious appointments in the English Church, and were trusted to run ecclesiastical affairs in areas where the monarchs did not take a direct interest. In 1690, for instance, Burnet, Patrick, Stillingfleet, Sharp, Tillotson and Tenison were appointed to supervise the reconstruction of the Irish establishment after a Jacobite revolt. Similarly in 1694, Tenison, Sharp, Patrick, Stillingfleet and Burnet were put onto a commission to handle ecclesiastical patronage after Queen Mary's death.<sup>34</sup> These clerics - reform-minded, indebted to William, and elevated to prestigious platforms - would constitute the core of the court's propaganda machine.

Other clergymen, whilst not on Burnet's list, were drawn into his polemical activity, and must be considered key courtly reformers. One such man was Bishop William Lloyd of St Asaph's (promoted to Coventry and Lichfield in 1692). He was left off the December paper because he was already on the episcopal bench by 1688, and so would not have appeared amongst recommendations for preferment. Nevertheless he was to continue the close association with Burnet which has been noted in 1688/9, and would maintain his ideological alliance with him. Richard Kidder, the preacher at the Rolls, was also omitted from Burnet's original memorandum; but like Lloyd must be considered an integral member of Burnet's team. He had been a popular London clergyman, was sponsored for ecclesiastical preferment by Tillotson and Burnet, and was a close friend of Horneck's.<sup>35</sup> After the Revolution, his career mirrored those of the other courtly reformers, as he ascended to the

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<sup>33</sup> Hart, Life ... Sharp, pp.131-3.

<sup>34</sup> For the Irish commission see, Calendar of state papers domestic, 1690-1, p.158-9 - commission to clerics, dated November 6th, 1690. The other members of the commission were William Lloyd and Henry Compton: of whom, more below. For the patronage commission, see Luttrell, Brief relation, vol.3, p.446; The other member was William Lloyd.

<sup>35</sup> Kidder's popularity as a preacher at the Rolls and at Blackfriars is chronicled in The dictionary of national biography, vol.11, p.96. For his recommendation by Burnet and Tillotson to replace Patrick at Covent Garden see Calendar of state papers domestic, 1689-90, p.246. Kidder wrote an affectionate "Life" of Horneck.

Chapel Royal early in 1689, replaced the non-juring Thomas Ken at Bath and Wells in 1691, and did much to preach the virtues of Williamite reformation. Also important for royal propaganda were the bishops' clerical clients. Ministers such as Ralph Barker, George Royce, and John Hartcliffe - all patronised by Tillotson - weighed in to back the message of their masters.<sup>36</sup> Royce, for instance, would preach on William's Irish campaign in 1690; and Hartcliffe was to publish A treatise of the moral ... virtues (1691), whose explicit purpose was to outline the righteousness made possible by "our late wonderful Revolution".<sup>37</sup> Mention should also be made of Henry Compton, bishop of London. Although this man was to drift out of the core group of courtly reformers in 1691 (he withdrew in disgust at being beaten by Tillotson to Canterbury), his links with the others went back before the Revolution, and he worked amongst the Burnetian allies in the early months of Orange rule. As the capital's diocesan since 1674 Compton had promoted the "small awakening" through a series of clerical conferences; and he had played an active part in the anti-popery campaign during James' reign.<sup>38</sup> In 1688/9, he was an enthusiastic Williamite, and lent his weight to Burnet's propaganda. He joined Patrick in a communion service for the Prince of Orange in early January; consecrated the new bishop of Salisbury in March; and crowned the new King on the 11th April.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> For patronage of these clerics see Thomas Birch, The life of the Most Reverend Dr. John Tillotson, Lord archbishop of Canterbury, (London, 1752), pp.260-3, 392.

<sup>37</sup> John Hartcliffe, A treatise of the moral and intellectual virtues, (London, 1691) For Royce's sermons and his recommendation by Tillotson see below, p.168-9.

<sup>38</sup> See, Carpenter, Protestant bishop, especially pp.208-215 which deal with the pastoral conferences to improve spiritual provision. These had led to a series of letters to the whole diocese, see S.W.Cornish ed., Episcopalia: or the letters of ... Henry Compton ... to the clergy of his diocese, (Oxford, 1842). Compton was suspended by James for refusing to silence John Sharp's preaching against popery, see Carpenter, Protestant Bishop, chapter 6. He had also been one of the seven men who had signed the invitation to William to intervene in England in 1688, see Andrew Browning ed. English historical documents, 1660-1714, (1953), p.122.

<sup>39</sup> For the communion service, see Kerr and Duncan, Routledge papers, p.57. For Burnet's consecration, see Luttrell, Brief relation, vol.1, p.516. Anthony Horneck preached on this occasion, again



Although the bishops were to be at the heart of reformation publicity, they were aided by secular politicians. The King's ministers obviously played vital roles within the propaganda campaign, especially when advising on the wording of royal speeches, and the organisation of public ceremonies. The Earl of Nottingham, Secretary of State from 1689 to 1693 was particularly active. He had been an old patron of Sharp, Tenison, Stillingfleet and Tillotson; and had aided the production of Burnet's History of the Reformation. When in office under William, he continued to consult closely with his clerical friends, and contributed to their promotion of the new regime.<sup>40</sup> Later in the decade, the clerical propagandists worked closely with Lord Somers.<sup>41</sup> Most importantly, however, the bishops had the support of Queen Mary. This was vital because communications between the King and his chief propagandists were not always easy. Not only was William frequently out of the country, fighting in Ireland or Flanders, his personal relationship with his advisers, especially Burnet, was occasionally tense. There seems, for instance, to have been a particularly cool period over the summer of 1689, during which William refused to entertain his bishop of Salisbury, and privately expressed his irritation with the man.<sup>42</sup> (Interestingly, this temporary strain - the two men were back on intimate terms by the spring of 1690 - was caused

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confirming the close-knit nature of courtly reformation circles. See Anthony Horneck, A sermon preached at Fulham, in the chappel of the palace, upon Easter-day, 1689, at the consecration of the Right Reverend Father in God, Gilbert, Lord Bishop of Sarum, (London, 1689). For the coronation see above chapter 1, section III.

<sup>40</sup> For Nottingham's patronage of this group, see Henry Horwitz, Revolution politics: the career of Daniel Finch, second Earl of Nottingham, 1647-1730, (Cambridge, 1968), pp.262-3. Sharp, Life of ... Sharp, vol.1, pp.104-5 speaks of Nottingham's patronage of Sharp. For his family's support for Burnet's History see Burnet, History of the Reformation, vol.2, p.4.

<sup>41</sup> See Bennett, "William III and the episcopate", p.124.

<sup>42</sup> Clarke and Foxcroft, Life ... Burnet p.266. For the expressions of irritation, see Foxcroft, Life ... George Savile, vol.2, p.216 - an extract, dated April 21st 1689, from the "Spencer House journals" which record conversations between William and Halifax. Halifax wrote that he never heard William speak well of Burnet.

by Burnet's excess of zeal in his role as propaganda adviser.<sup>43</sup> William was affronted by the bishop's hectoring him on his damaging coldness and reserve towards the English.)<sup>44</sup> By contrast, Mary was much easier for Burnet and his allies to approach. Her intimacy with the Scotsman in Holland had extended to his colleagues once she was in back in England, and she showed the whole group great support and encouragement.<sup>45</sup> As the person to whom William delegated ecclesiastical policy, Mary saw much of the bishops on business. She also took a close interest in the cleric's careers and publications; and constantly sought their spiritual and political counsels.<sup>46</sup> Burnet, in particular, remained in close attendance. He spent his summers at Windsor: a convenient location which was just inside his diocese, but was close enough to Whitehall to allow weekly audiences with the Queen.<sup>47</sup> Such intimate relations meant that Mary could act as a channel of communication between the King and his ideologues. She was keenly aware

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<sup>43</sup> For the reconciliation, see Clarke and Foxcroft, Life ... Burnet, p.286.

<sup>44</sup> Burnet mentions his worries about William's coldness throughout his History and in other writings. Early in 1689 he tried to take action but was rebuffed. In an extract from his original memoirs - Bodleian Additional Ms. D 24 f.211, reprinted in Foxcroft, Supplement ... History, p.496, he records, "I was set on by many to speak to him to change his cold way, but he cut me off when I entered upon a freedom with him, so that I could not go through with it. I wrote him a very plain letter to let him see the turn the nation was making from him. This offended him so that for some months I was not admitted to speak to him".

<sup>45</sup> Arguments for close contact between Mary and the bishops can be found in Mark Goldie, "Jonas Proast, John Locke and the politics of Toleration", in John Walsh, Colin Haydon and Stephen Taylor eds. The Church of England c.1689 - c.1833: from toleration to tractarianism, (forthcoming) and Craig Rose, "Providence, Protestant union and godly reformation in the 1690s", (Paper read at the Institute of Historical Research seventeenth century seminar, 14th March, 1991).

<sup>46</sup> Tillotson and Burnet both spoke warmly of the Queen's interest in their work and careers. See, for instance, The letters of Lady Russell, 7th edition (London, 1809), p.282, where Tillotson talks of "the Queen's extraordinary favour to me"; British Library Additional Ms. 4239, f.316-7, in which Tillotson makes a private resolution not to disturb Mary so much with his troubles; Gilbert Burnet, An exposition of the thirty nine articles of the Church of England, (London, 1699), preface, which talks of Mary's interest in the volume in its formative stages.

<sup>47</sup> Clarke and Foxcroft, Life ... Burnet, p.286.

of the importance of public appearances, and played a pivotal role in the development of royal propaganda.<sup>48</sup> It was she who adopted, organised and promoted many of the courtly reformation initiatives described below.

Whilst the machinery of reformation propaganda is being examined, it is important to consider the means used to transmit Williamite ideals. A publicity campaign can fail as easily through inadequate media, as through an unconvincing message, so it is vital to pay as close attention to the vehicles of Williamite argument as to its promoters and content. Unfortunately, study of this subject is in many ways frustrating. It is impossible to state precisely how effective each means of propaganda was in spreading the Williamite message, since far too few contemporaries left direct evidence of their reception of the ideology. In compensation, however, something can be said about the "potential reach" of the various channels of communication used. Whilst historians cannot know how many men were actually persuaded by each means of propaganda, they can try to analyze the extent to which they penetrated society, and allowed court spokesmen contact with ordinary Englishmen.

The potential reach of the first medium of courtly reformation - public preaching - is difficult to assess. The problem is that scholars are not agreed about the level of church attendance in late Stuart England. Courtly reformers broadcast their message in sermons, and ordered their subordinate clergy to do the same; but without a sense of how many people turned up to hear their efforts, it is impossible to judge the strength of this strategy. Traditionally, ecclesiastical historians have been pessimistic about church going after the Revolution. They have blamed the 1689 Toleration Act (which permitted religious services outside Anglican buildings) for breaking cleric's hold over the population, and creating so much confusion about the obligation to attend public worship, that many people evaded it

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<sup>48</sup> Mary's work to improve the public face of the monarchy is discussed in Chapman, Mary II, pp.173-4.



altogether.<sup>49</sup> If this is correct, then public preaching would no longer be a powerful means of persuasion. On the other hand, this picture may be too gloomy. Recently, some historians have suggested that, whilst not all late Stuart services were well attended, much of the population did go to church regularly, and that public worship retained a central place in people's cultural and social lives.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, it has been argued that services with sermons were the most popular kind of worship, and that ecclesiastical discipline in the 1690s continued to come down hard on those who stayed away from church (unless they were specifically protected by attendance at a dissenting meeting house).<sup>51</sup> If this view is correct, then it would clearly be a mistake to see preaching as a spent ideological force. The courtly reformers would have enjoyed audiences for their pulpit addresses, and sermons would have remained an effective instrument of mass communication.

Whatever the truth about sermonising, there can be little doubt of the potential effectiveness of the courtly reformers' second means of propaganda. Burnet's circle were enthusiastic participants in an English book trade which had become the most comprehensive and efficient media for the transmission of ideas.

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<sup>49</sup> The classic statements of this view of 1689 have been by G.V.Bennett, Tory crisis in Church and state: the career of Francis Atterbury, (Oxford, 1975), and G.V.Bennett, "Conflict in the Church", in Holmes, Britain ... Glorious Revolution, pp.155-175 - both of which see Anglican decline as a central issue of late Stuart politics. Geoffrey Holmes has concurred with this analysis in Trial ... Sacheverell, and "Religion and party in late Stuart England", in Geoffrey Holmes ed., Politics, religion and society in England, 1679-1742, (London, 1986). See also A.D.Gilbert, Religion and society in industrial England, (London, 1976), pp.6-7; J.H.Pruett, The parish clergy under the later Stuarts, (Urbana, Illinois, 1978), pp.177-8.

<sup>50</sup> Donald A.Spaeth, "Common prayer? popular observance of the Anglican liturgy in Restoration Wiltshire", in S.J.Wright, Parish, Church and people: local studies in religion, 1350-1750, (London, 1988), pp.125-151. W.J.Gregory, "Archbishop, Cathedral and parish: the diocese of Canterbury, 1660-1805", (Oxford PhD thesis, forthcoming). Jonathan Barry, "Cultural patronage and the Anglican crisis in Bristol, c.1689-1775" in John Walsh et al, The Church of England.

<sup>51</sup> W.J.Gregory, "Archbishop, Cathedral and parish", chapter 6; C.E.Davies, "The enforcement of religious uniformity in England, 1668-1700, with special reference to the dioceses of Chichester and Worcester", (Oxford DPhil, 1982).

From its importation into the country in the early sixteenth century, printing had rapidly penetrated English society. It is difficult to assess the level of reading skills at any one time, and so it is hard to tell how many people had direct access to the new medium. However, records of the ability to sign names imply that about 30% of English males were literate by the end of the seventeenth century.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, it is clear that literacy rates were very high in London by William's reign, and anecdotal evidence suggests that reading was a far more widespread accomplishment than writing.<sup>53</sup> It is therefore possible that a substantial proportion of the English population could follow a text by the time of the Revolution. In this advance of print, the decades before William's arrival had been particularly important. The Interregnum, and the Restoration period, had seen a rapid expansion in English publishing, as the book trade burst through old restrictions, produced more material, and restructured to improve the distribution of its wares.<sup>54</sup> During the Civil Wars, government control of the press had broken down, and the prevailing ideological turmoil had encouraged many writers into print.<sup>55</sup> Consequently, when the Stuarts returned, they found it hard to control the publishing industry. Although some attempt was made to re-impose restrictions through the 1662 Print Act, this was only partly successful. The law left loopholes; the licensing system it

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<sup>52</sup> A Stuart literacy rate of around 30% is suggested by David Cressy, Literacy and the social order: reading and writing in Tudor and Stuart England, (Cambridge, 1980), and Lawrence Stone, "Literacy and education in England 1640-1900", Past and Present, 42 (1969), pp.69-139.

<sup>53</sup> Optimism about reading literacy rates above Cressy and Stone's figures can be found in Margaret Spufford, Small books and pleasant histories: popular fiction and its readership in seventeenth-century England, (London, 1982), and "First steps in literacy: the reading and writing experiences of the humblest seventeenth-century spiritual autobiographers", Social History, 4 (1979), pp.407-35; also Thomas Laquer, "The cultural origins of popular literacy in England", Oxford Review of Education, 2 (1976), pp.255-75. Tessa Watt, Cheap print and popular piety, 1550-1640, (Cambridge, 1991), p.6, reviews encouragement to reading literacy by the English Church.

<sup>54</sup> John Feather, A history of British publishing, (London, 1988), p.62-3.

<sup>55</sup> Feather, History ... publishing, p.50-1.

instituted was never watertight; and its limitations on the number of printers were never properly implemented<sup>56</sup> As a result the book trade continued to develop, so that by William's reign its scale and vigour were remarkable. For the period between 1688 and 1725, the historian Henry Plomer listed over a thousand publishers and booksellers active in London, and recorded bookshops in a large number of provincial and local centres.<sup>57</sup> In one three month period alone, the Hilary term of 1690, the stationers' catalogues revealed an industry producing one hundred and seventeen new titles, brought out by fifty three different publishers.<sup>58</sup> As it attained this scale, the book trade took important new initiatives in marketing, distribution and promotion. In the late Stuart period, book wholesaling grew rapidly, and publishers showed greater sophistication and imagination in the advertisement of their wares.<sup>59</sup> Having said all this, books were expensive. Even an octavo volume cost at least five shillings, and most titles did not sell enough to exhaust their first edition. (The first edition usually had a print run around 1,000 - any subsequent editions were generally larger). However, the seventeenth century saw the rapid development of

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<sup>56</sup> F.S.Siebert, The freedom of the press in England, 1476-1776, (Urbana, Illinois, 1952), pp.239-257. The difficulties of using the common law of libel to supplement statute restrictions is explored in John Feather, "The English book trade and the law, 1695-1799", Publishing History, 12 (1982), pp.51-76. "Trade publishers" - people who would handle books when the real publisher wished to distance himself from possibly seditious works - also made the law difficult to enforce, see Michael Treadwell, "The English book trade", in Robert P. Maccubin and Martha Hamilton-Phillips, The age of William III and Mary II: power, politics and patronage, 1688-1702, (Williamsburg, 1989), pp.358-65, especially p.360.

<sup>57</sup> Henry R.Plomer, A dictionary of the printers and booksellers who were working in England, Scotland and Ireland, 1686-1725, (Oxford, 1922).

<sup>58</sup> Arber, Term catalogues, vol.2, pp.297-309.

A single publisher, John Dunton of St. Paul's Churchyard, printed over one hundred and eighty different works between 1688 and 1697. See Stephen Parks, John Dunton and the English book trade. A study of his career with a checklist of his publications, (London, 1976), p.44.

<sup>59</sup> Feather, History ... publishing, p.61, Graham Pollard, "The English market for printed books", Publishing History, 4 (1978), pp.9-48, especially p.9-17. Marjorie Plant, The English book trade: an economic history of the making and sale of books, 2nd edition (London, 1965), pp.248-52.



smaller and cheaper products, such as ballads, broadsides, prints and chapbooks, which sold for as little as a penny.<sup>60</sup>

William's bishops were quick to take advantage of the opportunities offered by this developing market. Not only did they produce a steady stream of works for publication in the 1690s, they demonstrated a good understanding of the book trade, using those parts of the industry which were likely to be most efficient in broadcasting their ideas. For a start, they fostered close working relationships with a small group of leading London publishers, whose reputations and extensive business contacts would guarantee effective distribution for their works. Gilbert Burnet, Simon Patrick and Thomas Tenison published almost exclusively with Richard Chiswell.<sup>61</sup> John Dunton, the somewhat maverick printer, whose autobiography provided thumbnail sketches of the men in his business, described Chiswell as the most successful and influential bookseller in London. He headed Dunton's list of the most "eminent" men of his trade, and was said to

[deserve] the Title of Metropolitan Bookseller of England, if not of all the World. His NAME at the Bottom of a Title Page, does sufficiently recommend the Book.<sup>62</sup>

Stillingfleet, Wake, Kidder and Tillotson also cashed in on this success by occasionally using Chiswell to bring out their works. John Sharp, meanwhile, sent his writings to Walter Kettilby, "an eminent episcopal bookseller", whilst Kidder and Tillotson, along with Edward Fowler, had most of their works handled by Brabizon Aylmer, another aristocrat of the book world, whom Dunton, a co-publisher and friend, described as "well acquainted with the mysteries of the trade."<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Feather, History ... publishing, p.60; Margaret Spufford, Small books, Carolyn Nelson, "English newspapers and periodicals", in Maccubin and Hamilton-Phillips, Age of William III, pp.366-372, especially, p.367-8.

<sup>61</sup> Donald Wing ed., Short title catalogue of books printed in England ... 1641-1700, 2nd edition revised, 3 vols (New York, 1972). This conveniently gives the names of publishers in its entries for each volume listed.

<sup>62</sup> John Dunton, The life and errors of John Dunton esq., late citizen of London, (London, 1705), p.280.

<sup>63</sup> Wing, Short title catalogue; Dunton, Life and errors, pp.226, 282, 282.

The bishops' skill in selecting publishers was augmented by their choice of literary genre. One of the most important units of courtly reformation propaganda was the printed sermon. By broadcasting their views in this form, Burnet and his allies tapped into one of the most vigorous markets developed by the emerging book industry. In the late seventeenth century, sermons were the publishers' bread and butter. A single unbound sermon was cheap and easy to produce, and entered into the vigorous chap-book trade where it could sell for very small sums. Vast numbers were produced. In 1690 alone, fifty four new sermons were advertised in the stationers' catalogues. These volumes were popular with booksellers, because they were popular with the public. Single sermons were some of the fastest and biggest selling volumes of the era. In 1678, a sermon sold over 6,000 copies in two days.<sup>64</sup>

C.J.Sommerville, trying to establish the most popular books in Restoration England, found that many of his best-sellers were versions of pulpit preaching.<sup>65</sup> In 1681, Edmund Hickergill, excusing his publication of yet another sermon, suggested that his age was saturated by this literary form.

I Know very well that every Book-sellers Stall groans under the burthen of Sermons, Sermons; - Sermons as common (and as commonly cryed about the Streets) as Ballads; Sermons before his Majesty, before the Judges, before the Right Honorable, the Right Worshipful &c., In Court, in City, in the University, in the Country, &c. Sermons of good use, Sermons of little or no use, Sermons of great use ... Sermons of Learned Composure both for Matter and Style; and Sermons given, and Sermons sold (over and over again) and

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<sup>64</sup> This was Edward Stillingfleet's Sermon Preach'd ... November 13th, 1678.

<sup>65</sup> C.J.Somerville, Popular religion in Restoration England, (Gainesville, Florida, 1977). Somerville places William Beveridge's A sermon concerning the excellence and usefulness of common prayer preached ... St. Peter's Cornhill, London, at the opening of the said parish church 27th of November, 1681, (London, 1682) and William Sherlock's A practical discourse concerning death, (London, 1689) amongst the period's most popular works. Sherlock's volume was the result of a series of sermons begun at the Temple, but not completed because they were still in progress when Sherlock was suspended for (temporarily) refusing the oaths to William and Mary. Sherlock, Practical discourse, epistle dedicatory.

some Sermons (perhaps) published out of meer Vanity and Itch to be seen in print.<sup>66</sup>

Despite Hickergill's cynicism, it was clear that there was a established demand for the sort of individual religious guidance which reading sermons could provide; and that "the press" had, in some sense, come to "supply the place of the pulpit".<sup>67</sup> Therefore, by couching their political arguments in sermon form, William's divines were cashing in on an extremely popular genre. They were incorporating their message of courtly reformation with the usual pulpit expositions of morality, providence and theology, which they knew the public would buy.

Whilst the Williamites utilised relatively new media, they did not neglect older forms of propaganda, which could still penetrate society. Above, it has been shown that personal appearances by the monarch, royal ceremonial and the liturgy of the established Church (especially when bolstered by the reproductive ability of print) could still form part of a powerful publicity campaign.<sup>68</sup> Below, the part played by proclamations and royal speeches to Parliament will be demonstrated.<sup>69</sup> Both these latter media were traditional means of spreading court ideology, and consequently had been developed into highly sophisticated tools of propaganda. By the 1690s, proclamations were established as one of the most comprehensive forms of mass communication available to English monarchs. Once a proclamation was issued, it was not only published in the London Gazette, it was reproduced in large numbers by the royal printers, and sent out to the country in bundles. Special messengers conveyed the documents to sheriffs and mayors in every locality, and also delivered an

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<sup>66</sup> Edmund Hickergill, The horrid sin of man-catching: explain'd in a sermon upon Jer.5.25.26., (London, 1681), epistle to the reader.

<sup>67</sup> Sherlock Practical discourse, epistle dedicatory. Sommerville, Popular religion, advances the idea that a new private spirituality was developing, but John Spurr, The Restoration Church of England, 1646-1689, (New Haven, Conn., 1991), chapters 6-7, shows that private devotional literature was usually intended to be integrated into a complete Christian life, which still had public worship as its linchpin.

<sup>68</sup> See above chapter 2, section II.

<sup>69</sup> See below, chapter 3, section V.



accompanying writ, which ordered the receiving officials to broadcast the text of the proclamation in their jurisdictions. In towns this was often done by crying out the royal message in the streets, and in the counties proclamations were frequently read out at quarter sessions, when local elites, down to the level of grand jurymen, would be assembled. Sheriffs and mayors were also expected to distribute extra copies of the document to magistrates and clergymen, who posted them in public places.<sup>70</sup> Clearly, the initial audience for speeches to Parliament was much more limited. In the first instance, the royal address was heard only by the MPs and peers assembled at Westminster. However, this restriction was mitigated by the elite nature of the auditors, who enjoyed power and reputation in places across the kingdom, and might be expected to convey the essence of their ruler's words to their neighbourhoods. Also English monarchs evaded the limitations of their parliamentary speeches by having them printed, and sold as broadsides.<sup>71</sup> William's effort, His Majesties most gracious speech to both Houses ... 16th March, 1689 was to be the first in a series of publications by this monarch, some of which were sufficiently popular to be printed in more than one edition.<sup>72</sup>

In the light of the above review of the personnel and media of reformation, it is arguable that Burnet assembled an extraordinarily efficient propaganda machine in 1689. Remarkably rapidly, considering the disruption of Revolution, he appropriated the established publicity instruments of the English regime; recruited a close knit band of ideological allies; and began a vigorous and sophisticated use of the press. It was, to a large extent, the bishop's success in building such an engine which allowed the court to dominate the reformation movement

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<sup>70</sup> Steele, Tudor and Stuart proclamations, vol.1, pp.ix, xvi-xvii.

<sup>71</sup> James I, Charles I and Charles II had all regularly printed their parliamentary speeches, but A.W.Pollard and G.R.Redgrave eds, A short title catalogue of books printed in England, Scotland and Ireland ... 1475-1640 (Cambridge, 1926), lists no contemporary publication of Elizabeth's oratory. Printing of parliamentary speeches thus appears to have been a Stuart innovation.

<sup>72</sup> William III, His Majesties most gracious speech to both Houses of Parliament, the 16th day of March 1689, (London, 1688).

in the 1690s, and to impress upon the people the moral and religious consequences of rule by a godly King.

### III

The campaign of courtly reformation can be loosely divided into two parts. The first concerned the Williamite court. The King's propagandists had to convince the English that the royal household was an appropriate body to lead a national renewal. This was important because courts had traditionally been viewed as sites of depravity, and because the Williamites themselves had portrayed royal circles as polluted in their denunciation of James. Unless this image could be reversed, and it could be demonstrated that the court was now pure, there would be little point in moving to the second part of the campaign. Until a righteous royal household had been established in the public mind, there was no sense trying to demonstrate that the incoming regime would stimulate a new godliness in the realm as a whole.

The reformer's key strategy for improving the court's reputation was to construct a particular image of Queen Mary. From the moment of her return to England in February 1689, Burnet and his allies laboured to present William's consort as a woman of immense personal piety, whose example and censure were clearing the court of vice. The chief inspiration for this rhetoric appears to have been Mary herself. In her private memoirs, which she wrote up at the end of every year, the Queen revealed herself to be a deeply spiritual person, who was acutely conscious of the need to present a godly face to the world.<sup>73</sup> She worried constantly about sin amongst her circle; worked hard to promote religion and good manners within the household; and was particularly concerned to increase the frequency and quality of divine services at royal palaces.<sup>74</sup> Exploiting and encouraging such zeal, the Williamite propagandists broadcast Mary's righteousness, and portrayed a Queen

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<sup>73</sup> R. Doebner ed., Memoirs of Mary, Queen of England, 1689-1693, (London, 1886). See also, Majorie Bowen, The third Mary Stuart: Mary of York, Orange and England. Being a character study with memoirs and letters of Queen Mary II of England 1662-1694, (London, 1929).

<sup>74</sup> For example, she instituted "sermons at Whitehall in the afternoon" which she noted pleased "most sober people". Doebner, Memoirs ... Mary, p.16.

preparing her court for its role as the core of a new godly nation. Whilst she lived, the reformers lauded the effect she had upon those around her.<sup>75</sup> When she died, they led the retrospective praise. On the 5th March, 1695, Thomas Tenison, newly appointed archbishop of Canterbury, preached her funeral sermon in Westminster Abbey.<sup>76</sup> This address emphasised her exemplary piety and her desire to reform the court, and was published to set the tone for other memorial literature. Amongst a vast outpouring of sermons and essays, Gilbert Burnet, William Wake and Edward Fowler produced works which praised Mary, and commented on the virtue of the royal household under her influence.<sup>77</sup>

This construction of the Queen was the core of Williamite attempts to establish the godliness of the court. It was not, however, their sole initiative to that end. It is necessary to stress this, both because Mary has received disproportionate attention in the historiography of the post-Revolution court, and because a recent article by William Speck has suggested that the strategy of concentrating upon the Queen was the only option if propagandists wanted to portray a righteous royal household.<sup>78</sup> Speck's work shed much valuable light on Mary's role within the regime's propaganda and policy, but it erred in arguing that widespread rumours of William's homosexuality and extra-marital affairs prevented any presentation of

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<sup>75</sup> See for example, John Tillotson, A sermon preach'd at Whitehall before the Queen on the monthly fast day, Sept. 16, 1691, (London, 1690), pp.36-7. Gilbert Burnet, A sermon preached at White-hall on the 26th of Novemb. 1691, being the thanksgiving day, (London, 1691), pp.27-8, 32.

<sup>76</sup> Thomas Tenison, A sermon preached at the funeral of her late Majesty Queen Mary of ever blessed memory in the Abbey Church in Westminster upon March 5 1694/5, (London, 1695). The form of the funeral was published as The form of the proceeding to the funeral of her late Majesty, Mary II, (London, 1695).

<sup>77</sup> Edward Fowler, A discourse of the great disingenuity and unreasonableness of repining at afflicting providences, (London, 1695), preface; Gilbert Burnet, An essay on the memory of the late Queen, (London, 1695); William Wake, Of our obligation to put our trust in God rather than in men ... a sermon preached before ... Gray's-Inn, upon the occasion of the death of our late royal sovereign, Queen Mary, (London, 1695).

<sup>78</sup> Speck, "William - and Mary?" For works dealing with Mary see Schwoerer, "Images ... Mary II", and above, footnote 45.



courtly virtue based on him.<sup>79</sup> Whilst it is true that Jacobites spread scandalous stories about William, these did not prevent his spokesmen making favourable assessments of his ethical and religious influence.<sup>80</sup> The courtly reformers always held the King up as an example of piety and good behaviour amongst his close contacts; and after Mary's death in 1694 they portrayed him accepting many of his wife's domestic moral duties. In the second half of the decade he was represented attending religious services in the household, following Mary's pattern of visible personal prayer, and surrounding himself with godly courtiers.<sup>81</sup> If there had been more concentration on Mary in the early years of the reign, this was possibly because as a woman, she was seen as a more appropriate promoter of household virtues; and also because, unlike her husband (who was frequently away at war), she was constantly present in the royal palaces and was therefore in a better position reform them.

Another important initiative to promote the godly court, which did not depend upon the Queen, utilised the Chapel Royal. As with so much else, the origins of the strategy lay in that paper Burnet wrote to the Prince of Orange in December 1688. Amongst the many

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<sup>79</sup> Speck, "William - and Mary?", p.143.

<sup>80</sup> Much of the insinuation was in the form of scurrilous verse - see W.J.Cameron ed., Poems on affairs of state: Augustan satirical verse, 1660-1714, 9 vols (New Haven, Conn., 1971), vol.5, pp.xxxvii, 37-8.

<sup>81</sup> Burnet was just one of the men who went on preaching regularly at court, even when Mary had died, see Gilbert Burnet, A sermon preach'd before the King at St. James' Chapel on the 10th of February, 1694/5, (London, 1695); Gilbert Burnet, A sermon preached before the King at Whitehall on Christmas day, 1696, (London, 1697); Gilbert Burnet, A sermon preached before the King at Whitehall, Dec. 2, 1697, being the thanksgiving day for the peace, (London, 1698).

The King also made much the virtue of his court. His proclamation, William III, By the King, a proclamation for preventing and punishing immorality and prophaness. ... given 24 February 1697, (London, 1697), said he would bring vicious persons to book especially "such who are employed near our royal person; and that for the greater encouragement of religion and morality, we will, upon all occasions, distinguish men of piety and virtue by marks of our royal favour."

Three years after William's death, the personal prayers he had used, composed by Tillotson, were published. These demanded a rigorous programme of self-examination and repentance which would have served as an example to his circle. [John Tillotson], A form of prayers used by his late Majesty K.William III when he received the holy sacrament, (London, 1704).

recommendations contained in this document, was the following suggestion.

The whole number of the King's Chaplains, which consist of good men for the most part, ought also surely to be dissolved, and a new set to be formed with more choice, for the rule was formerly to take all Bishops out of that Body. It may be fit for his Highness to have Chaplains, that every one may wait his week.<sup>82</sup>

Burnet was here arguing that William should remodel the clerical personnel of the royal household. Traditionally, the English court had included forty eight chaplains whose job was to attend the King and cater for his spiritual needs. Burnet now suggested that James' ministers be dismissed, and that William surround himself with clerics of his own choosing. The incoming King took up this suggestion, and, on his accession, issued a new list of chaplains, who, unsurprisingly, included Sharp, Wake, Patrick, Fowler, Tillotson, Tenison, Stillingfleet, Horneck and Kidder.<sup>83</sup>

At one level, of course, these promotions were merely rewards for Burnet's proteges. At another, however, they served as propaganda. The men advanced were some of the most famous and respected clerics of the day. They were not only heroes of the Church's battle against popery, and recognised leaders of the spiritual awakening in London, but successful religious authors, whose books had been popular under Charles and James, and would remain so under William.<sup>84</sup> Successive editions of their earlier works continued to sell well through the 1690s, with Tillotson and Patrick in particular enjoying persistent demand.<sup>85</sup> By bringing such men to his court, William provided a huge

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<sup>82</sup> Blencowe ed., Diary ... times of Charles the Second, p.286.

<sup>83</sup> An historical account of the memorable actions of the most glorious monarch, William III, (London, 1689), appendix.

<sup>84</sup> One of them, Tillotson, had been so influential that he has been widely credited with altering the whole style of published English prose. See J.Mackay, "John Tillotson (1630-1694): a study of his life and his contribution to the development of English prose" (Oxford, DPhil, 1952); William M.Spellman, "Archbishop John Tillotson and the meaning of moralism", Anglican and Episcopalian History, 56 (1987), pp.404-421, especially, p.406.

<sup>85</sup> Tillotson's A persuasive to frequent communion in the holy sacrament of the lords supper, [first edition (London, 1683)], got its seventh to thirteenth editions in the 1690s, and a constant stream of

boost for its claims to godliness. He and his Queen attracted some of the nation's most famous and popular pastors into the royal household, and bound them to intense periods of work amongst their courtiers. In 1689, Tillotson noted the burden of serving masters who demanded unusually constant proximity from their clerical servants.<sup>86</sup> In this way, the men of Burnet's list turned William's court into a sort of spiritual powerhouse: a formal gathering of the nation's most respected ministers, which might well serve as the engine for godly renewal.

The chief means of propagating this image of a spiritualised court was the publication of court sermons. Monarchs before the Revolution had ordered that some of the preaching they heard in their regular round of religious services be printed to make it available to a wider audience. William and Mary, however, extended this practice massively. Once the dual monarchs had been crowned, the number of published court sermons exploded. The stationer's catalogues recorded a trickle of court sermons under Charles II and James II.<sup>87</sup> The average for the latter half of Charles' reign was around three a year, and the supply dried up entirely after 1686. By contrast the catalogues listed vast numbers for the years after the Revolution. There were nine court sermons published in 1689, twenty in 1690, twenty again in 1691,

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collected sermons were produced, some under the editorship of Tillotson's chaplain, Ralph Barker. Patrick's tract on baptism, Aqua genitalis, [first edition (London, 1659)], got its eleventh to fifteenth editions between 1690 and 1699, his The devout Christian instructed how to pray and give thanks to God, [first edition (London, 1673)] got its eight to eleventh prints between 1689 and 1700, and his The Christian sacrifice, [first edition (London, 1671)], gained its ninth, tenth and eleventh impressions in 1690, 1693 and 1697.

William's clerics were so marketable that John Dunton praised the business acumen of those who had secured the right to print the bishops work. He noted that the trade of Stillingfleet's publisher, Richard Mortlock, had been much assisted by the divine's patronage, Dunton, Life and errors, p.286. The sale of the rights to Tillotson's works for two and a half thousand pounds in the late 1690s further underlines his importance. I.Simon ed., Three Restoration divines: Barrow, South and Tillotson, 2 vols (Paris, 1967, 1976), vol.2, p.353.

<sup>86</sup> British Library Additional Ms. 4292 f.150 - Tillotson to Ralph Barker [his chaplain], 25th April, 1689, "I was mistaken about our waiting; it is more strict than I thought, by reason of Their Majesties being betwixt Whitehall and Hampton Court; so that the chaplains are obliged to attend the whole month at each place."

<sup>87</sup> Arber, Term catalogues.



fourteen in 1692, sixteen in 1693, and a record twenty two in 1694. Even without the publications which evaded the stationers (and there were some), this was a production rate of nearly one a fortnight. In many cases court sermons represent a substantial proportion (or even all) of their authors' surviving published output. The clergy of Burnet's list played a large part in this bibliographic phenomenon. In the 1690s Burnet published at least fifteen of his court addresses. Tillotson printed at least nine before his death in 1694; Stillingfleet produced six between 1689 and 1693; and Sharp, Wake, Patrick and Tenison were all repeated performers.

Most of this output was superficially "apolitical". The majority of the sermons dealt with pastoral and spiritual themes: guiding the Christian through this life, and urging him to godly faith and behaviour.<sup>88</sup> In some cases, clerics used the opportunity of regular preaching at court to work through a spiritual or casuistical problem systematically, so that the collection of their publications formed a coherent pastoral guide.<sup>89</sup> Yet despite the lack of explicit Williamite ideology, these works could still be important carriers of royal propaganda. "Apolitical" sermons confirmed that the court was a centre of Christian instruction and edification, and advertised the fact that the monarchs regularly listened to their prestigious clerics. The effect was to bestow an almost evangelical air upon the royal household. Here, the sermons tacitly proclaimed, was a truly pious,

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<sup>88</sup> Tillotson's addresses were very much in this mould, as were Horneck's, and Stillingfleet's, and those produced by most of the lesser clerics and chaplains who preached before the monarchs. See, for example, John Tillotson, A sermon preach'd before the King and Queen at Hampton-Court April 14th 1689, (London, 1689); Edward Stillingfleet, A sermon preach'd before the Queen at Whitehall February 22nd 1688/9, (London, 1689); Anthony Horneck, The true nature of righteousness in a sermon preached before the King and Queen at Whitehall the 17th November, 1689, (London, 1689); and the court sermons of Thomas Staynoe, Charles Hickman, Richard Meggot and Edward Young.

<sup>89</sup> Edward Pelling used his court sermons, A sermon preached ... before the Queen, March the Sixteenth, 1691, (London, 1692); A sermon preached before the King ... December 13th 1691, (London, 1692); A sermon preached before the King ... October 13th 1695, (London, 1695) to explore aspects of the government of the conscience. John Lambe's constant theme was the threat to the soul from debauched appetites in sermons preached before the monarch on January 19th 1689, January 24th 1690/1, January 15th 1692, March 22nd 1692, January 13th 1694/5.

serious and godly monarchy. This message was driven home by the form in which the sermons appeared. The works had the words "Preach'd before the KING and QUEEN" and "Printed by Their Majesties special command" plastered in large or bold Gothic type across their title pages. Title pages were browsed in bookshops, and were posted in public places to advertise the volume. They would, therefore, have stressed the monarch's personal attendance at the original address, and their approval of Christian preaching, even to those who never ploughed through the sermon itself.

There is some evidence that this strategy of using sermons to promote a godly image of the court had an impact. Some of the religious addresses to the monarchs were very popular in the 1690s, and became minor classics of their time. Tenison's sermons Concerning the folly of atheism, and Concerning the coelestial body, given at Whitehall in 1691 and 1694, both had second editions in 1695, and Sharp's Sermon about the government of the thoughts went through three editions in 1694, (the year it was preached in the palace), and got a fourth imprint in 1698.<sup>90</sup> Towering over even these efforts was William Beveridge's Of the happiness of the saints in heaven, an address preached before the Queen in 1690. This went through multiple editions and smashed its way onto Somerville's all-time bestseller list.<sup>91</sup> Moreover, the series of court sermons were sufficiently prominent for both William's allies and his enemies to comment upon them. Thomas Manningham, a royal chaplain, believed that the quality of religious literature emanating from the court proved that a transformation had come over royal circles since the Revolution. In an oration to mark Mary's death he stated,

'Tis to the Queen that we owe many of those Pious Treatises which have been lately Publish'd amongst us; And that

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<sup>90</sup> Full titles of first editions:- Thomas Tenison, A sermon concerning the folly of atheism preached before the Queen at Whitehall, February 22, 1690/1, (London, 1691); Thomas Tenison, A sermon concerning the coelestial body of a Christian, after the resurrection: preached before the King and Queen at Whitehall, April 8 1694, being Easter day, (London, 1694); John Sharp, A sermon about the government of the thoughts preach'd before the King and Queen at Whitehall the 4th March ... 1693/4, (London, 1694).

<sup>91</sup> William Beveridge, Of the happiness of the saints in heaven: a sermon preach'd before the Queen at White-hall, October the 12th, 1690, (London, 1690). Somerville, Popular religion, p.55.

multitude of plain, useful and Practical Sermons. which She approv'd of, and cause'd to be Printed, are Her Gift to the Publick.

... It is judiciously concluded by many, that there was not such Preaching in the whole World besides, as at White-hall; and never such in England before.<sup>92</sup>

On the other side, Charles Leslie, a non-juror who hated both William and his clerical allies, complained about such sanctimoniousness, and the sermons which promoted it. He scowled that the King had hired "foul-mouth'd" preachers of "prostitute consciences"; had put "his own stamp" upon their words; and then published them "to the kingdom by SPECIAL COMMAND".<sup>93</sup> Such comment suggests that large numbers of Englishmen were aware of these publications, and it seems probable that they would have understood them as a signal that the court was reforming and edifying itself. A royal household with such preachers, and, more importantly, with such pious and attentive monarchs, might well have convinced its audience that it was fit to power a religious and moral revival.

#### IV

Having established the credentials of the royal household, the courtly reformers could address the second part of their campaign. This consisted of a series of initiatives designed to display the new regime purging sin from various aspects of national life. Broadly, the reformers were active in four areas. Two of these will not be discussed immediately, because they are best described in the context of specific political problems to be considered in later chapters. The first was an attempt to use the royal ecclesiastical supremacy to transform the Church into a more effective instrument of moral improvement.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Thomas Manningham, A sermon preach'd at the parish church of St. Andrews, Holborn the 30th December 1694. On the most lamented death of our most gracious sovereign Queen Mary, 3rd edition (London, 1695), p.10.

<sup>93</sup> [Charles Leslie], Remarks on some late sermons: and in particular, on Dr Sherlock's sermon at the Temple Dec 30 1694, (London, 1695), p.10.

<sup>94</sup> See below, chapter 5.



The second was an effort to present William as an administrative reformer, who was purging vice out of the civic service and delivering honest and efficient government.<sup>95</sup> Although these initiatives will not be dealt with now, it is essential to bear them in mind when considering what follows, because they were pursued at the same time as the rest of the courtly reformation campaign, and contributed to the regime's leadership of national renewal in the 1690s.

Of the remaining two initiatives, the most important, and least studied, was the post-revolutionary programme of public fasts and thanksgivings. National fasts and thanksgivings had been held in England since Tudor times.<sup>96</sup> Based on biblical models, these events aimed to win God's favour for the nation by demonstrating the population's adherence to his cause. Fasts were intended to avert divine judgements by staging a day of mortification and prayer. On fast days, the population was urged to reform itself through abstinence; and specially organised religious services insisted on "an unfeigned and universal repentance", "a visible amendment" of lives to atone for the nation's sins.<sup>97</sup> Thanksgivings were more joyful in mood, being intended to celebrate divine blessings upon England. However, their ultimate message was similar to that of fasts, because true gratitude to God was held to include resolution to walk in righteousness. Both fasts and thanksgivings were, therefore, designed as instruments of godly renewal.

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<sup>95</sup> See below, chapter 6.

<sup>96</sup> Roland Bartel, "The story of public fast days in England", Anglican Theological Review, 37 (1955), pp.190-220; W.S.Hudson, "Fast days and civil religion", in W.S.Hudson and L.J.Trinterud eds, Theology in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England, (Los Angeles, 1971), pp.1-24.

<sup>97</sup> The quotes are from William Talbot, A sermon preached at the Cathedral church of Worcester upon the monthly fast day September 16 1691, (London, 1691), p.9; James Gardiner, A sermon preach'd before the House of Lords at the Abbey Church of St Peter's Westminster on Wednesday the 11th December, 1695, being the day appointed for a solemn fast and humiliation, (London, 1695), p.25. For further reflections on the purpose of fasting, see Richard Kidder, Of fasting. A sermon preach'd before the Queen at Whitehall on May 23 1694, being the day of publick humiliation, (London, 1694); Simon Patrick, A treatise of repentance and of fasting, especially the Lent fast, 3rd edition (London, 1700).

In the 1690s, William's propagandists would sponsor them as part of courtly reformation.

The strategy was built around an annual calendar of fasts and thanksgivings established at the Restoration. Since 1660, the English people had been required to gather in their churches three times a year on the anniversary of significant occasions in the country's history. On the 30th January, they fasted to atone for the execution of Charles I in 1649.<sup>98</sup> On the 29th May, they gave thanks for the return of Charles II in 1660.<sup>99</sup> On the 5th November, they celebrated the frustration of the 1605 Gunpowder Plot. These occasions could generate a good deal of popular enthusiasm, and were used by Restoration governments to promote the image of their regime. The proclamations, sermons and liturgy of the days were used to re-assert Stuart claims by arguing that the events of 1605, 1649 and 1660 had established the sanctity of the monarchy, and God's ultimate protection of it.<sup>100</sup>

In 1689, the new Williamite regime inherited this calendar. Although the fasts and thanksgivings had become associated with the ideology of the displaced government, they were retained. They did, after all, remain a good opportunity for mass propaganda, and it proved possible to adapt them to carry a Williamite message. The 5th November solemnity was easiest to convert. It had always sat least easily with Charles and James' claims, since the defeat of the Gunpowder Plotters was usually interpreted as a providential salvation of a Protestant monarchy. After the Restoration, when the court was widely suspected of popish sympathies, the 5th November had become a focus of opposition,

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<sup>98</sup> Charles II, By the King, a proclamation for the observation of the thirtieth day of January as a day of fast, ... given 25 January 1660, (London, 1660/1). This ordered that it be read out and the fast kept every year.

<sup>99</sup> Charles II, By the King, a proclamation for the observation of the nine and twentieth day of May instant, as a day of publick thanksgiving ... given 20 May 1661, (London, 1661). Compulsory observation of this thanksgiving was enacted as 20 Charles II c.14.

<sup>100</sup> The fast and thanksgivings were pressed into particularly hard service after 1678, when the Stuart regime was threatened by the Exclusion Crisis, Rye House Plot and Monmouth's rebellion, see John Spurr, "Virtue, religion and government: the Anglican uses of providence", in Goldie et al Politics of religion, pp.29-47, especially pp.29-30. Also, Spurr, Restoration Church, pp.240-242.

spawning popular demonstrations against the supposedly Catholic policy of the government.<sup>101</sup> An occasion which sometimes embarrassed Charles and James could be useful to William. His reformation propaganda presented him as the saviour of the same cause which had been rescued in 1605, and the co-incidence of the Prince's landing at Torbay on the 5th November, 1688, added to the anniversary's Orange resonance. The ceremonies of the day could thus be used to establish the providential link between England's two salvations from popery, and to legitimate the later event with reference to the earlier. The Williamite regime exploited this possibility and turned the 5th November into a key occasion for the propagation of courtly reformation. Before the new government's first Gunpowder Day, the official reason given for its observance was altered to make it a day of gratitude for William's deliverance, as well as 1605.<sup>102</sup> Throughout the 1690s, 5th November sermons celebrated William's arrival as a providential protection of the true religion, and developed the reformation theme by asserting that the Prince had come to renew English virtue and piety. Gilbert Burnet, as so often, set the tone. In a published address to the House of Lords on Gunpowder Day, 1689, he compared 1605 and 1688, and outlined the new monarchs' role as God's instruments.

We have now a King and Queen, whose Examples we hope shall have as great an Influence over us for making us truly Good, as their Government has for making really Happy.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Tim Harris, London crowds in the reign of Charles II, (Cambridge, 1987), pp.93, 108-13. David Cressy, Bonfires and bells: national memory and the Protestant calendar in Elizabethan and Stuart England, (London, 1989), pp.178-184.

<sup>102</sup> David Cressy, Bonfires and bells, p.185. A form of prayer, with thanksgiving ... 5th November, (London, 1689), added words thanking God for William's deliverance to the gratitude for 1605.

<sup>103</sup> Gilbert Burnet, A sermon preached before the House of Peers in the Abby of Westminster on the 5th of November, being the gunpowder treason day, as likewise the day of His Majesties landing in England, (London, 1689), p.31.



Two years later, John Sharp told the same audience they must obey William and Mary, and purge themselves of lustful sin to show their gratitude to the delivering deity.<sup>104</sup>

The 30th January and 29th May services could be almost as useful to the Williamites. J.P.Kenyon has seen these fasts and thanksgivings as points around which forces hostile to William organised.<sup>105</sup> With their inherent condemnation of usurpation, they did provide an opportunity to cast veiled aspersions on the Revolution. A few of William's supporters, disgusted with the near-Jacobite atmosphere the days sometimes encouraged, called for their abolition.<sup>106</sup> However, the fasts and thanksgivings were not uncontested ground. The ideology of courtly reformation was flexible enough to absorb their power, and turn these occasions against the Restoration regimes. The rhetoric's providential interpretation of English history allowed 1649 and 1660 to be remembered, without derogating the achievement of 1688.

The 1690s sermons of William Lloyd show how the trick was performed. In two addresses preached on the 30th January in 1691 and 1697, Lloyd rooted Williamite propaganda in the conventions of the occasion. He began his case by utilising the cult of the royal martyr which had been fostered since 1660. Following the line laid down by Restoration clerics, he asserted that Charles I had been a saintly monarch, and argued that the effects of his sinful and treacherous execution (the Cromwellian tyranny), had been a divine punishment for it.<sup>107</sup> From this point, however, Lloyd skilfully altered the message of the old King's cult. As the preacher developed his argument, it became clear that he was not simply concerned to deplore the rebellion of the 1640s. He also wanted to condemn the sins which had led the English to butcher their godly King. He reviewed the lust, greed and intemperance

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<sup>104</sup> John Sharp, A sermon preached before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled in the Abbey-church at Westminster, on the fifth of November, 1691, (London, 1691), pp.25-6.

<sup>105</sup> Kenyon, Revolution principles, pp.69-75.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid. p.70.

<sup>107</sup> William Lloyd, A sermon preached before the Queen at Whitehall, January 30th, being the day of the martyrdom of King Charles the first, (London, 1691), pp.1-20.

which had prevailed in the early Stuart period, and argued that these were the true sources of disaster in 1649. Once this was done, Lloyd could suggest that the real lesson of the 30th of January was the danger of irreligion and immorality. Personal debauchery was the reason the English had lost their royal paragon, so the proper purpose of the commemorative fasts must be moral renewal as well as denunciation of regicide.<sup>108</sup> In 1691 the bishop stated that each man's duty on the anniversary of Charles' death was

within the Sphere of his Calling, to bring others to a sight and sense of their Sins; and to persuade them to joyn with us, every one, by his particular, to help on the publick Reformation.<sup>109</sup>

In following this line, Lloyd was not being completely innovatory. 30th January preachers had traditionally distinguished between the "instrumental" causes of the King's murder - rebellion and treason - and the "meretricious" ones - the general sins of the nation.<sup>110</sup> However, unlike earlier preachers, Lloyd used this analysis to attack the Restoration regime. Charles II, Lloyd implied, may have established a fast to mark 1649, but his moral laxity had defeated the proper point of his initiative. Charles had not read the true lesson of his father's murder because he had not resolved to lead his nation to godliness. Rather, his return had been marked by a "corruption of morals" which had, "spread from the court downwards into all parts of the nation"<sup>111</sup>

Instead of glorifying God, [Charles' supporters] fell to drinking of Healths. Instead of being stricter in Religion, they grew looser in their Lives. Instead of frequenting God's Worship, they fill'd the Play-houses and worse places.<sup>112</sup>

From here, Lloyd could convert the 30th January into a thoroughgoing Orange occasion. Following the courtly reformation case, he could claim

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<sup>108</sup> William Lloyd, A sermon preach'd before the House of Lords, at the Abbey-Church of St. Peter's Westminster, on Saturday the 30th January, 1696/7, (London, 1697), pp.5-21.

<sup>109</sup> Lloyd, Sermon ... Whitehall ... January 30th, p.22.

<sup>110</sup> Spurr, Restoration Church, p.242.

<sup>111</sup> Lloyd, Sermon ... House of Lords ... 30th January, 1696/7, p.25.

<sup>112</sup> Lloyd, Sermon ... Whitehall ... January 30th, p.28.

that 1688 was essential to the national renewal demanded by 1649. It was only after the Revolution, he argued, that a godly court was attempting to purge the nation's sins, and so honouring properly Charles I's sacrifice. Thus, even in a 30th January sermon which lauded the executed Stuart as a new Josiah, Lloyd was able to celebrate William.

It is plainly the design of God by this turn, to establish the Protestant Religion in these Kingdoms ...

And especially to unite us in that common design, of driving out all immorality and prophaness ... It is the purifying and Reforming of [Men's Lives] that is the chief business of Religion. And this is the chief design of God's Providence, in this Revolution.<sup>113</sup>

Lloyd's treatment of the 29th May in the 1690s fitted this pattern. Again, the event commemorated by this thanksgiving could be interpreted as a divine call for reformation, frustrated by the Restoration governments. In Lloyd's rhetoric, 1660 became a providential opportunity to restore national righteousness, which could only be properly utilised once the corrupt court had been cleared away at the Revolution. As with the 5th November thanksgiving, 1688 was legitimated by comparing it to an event already accepted as a divine deliverance.<sup>114</sup> As with the 30th January fast, courtly reformation turned an old Stuart propaganda weapon back against its creators.

The 5th November, 30th January, and 29th May were extremely useful occasions for the spread of Williamite propaganda. However, Burnet and his circle did not rest satisfied with them. Very early in the new reign, it was realised that the courtly reformation message could be broadcast even more effectively, if the programme of national repentance was expanded beyond the inherited Restoration calendar. If William and Mary promulgated extra fasts and thanksgivings their image as godly and reforming magistrates would benefit in two ways. First, additional events would provide more opportunities for sermons, prayers and proclamations to urge reformation, and to link this call with 1688. Second, the very act of instigating fasts and thanksgivings would give the King and Queen a righteous air. It would reveal them as rulers

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid. p.29.

<sup>114</sup> See William Lloyd, A sermon preached before Her Majesty on May 29, being the anniversary of the Restoration of the King and royal family, (London, 1692).



determined to use every means to remind their subjects of their duties to God.

The campaign to expand the number of solemnities began as early as the spring of 1689. Soon after the start of the war with France, Burnet approached Queen Mary with the suggestion that a public fast be held to secure God's blessing on England's armies.<sup>115</sup> The Queen agreed. A solemn day of fasting and humiliation was observed in London on the 5th June, with Burnet's circle playing a major role in the solemnities.<sup>116</sup> Early next year a royal proclamation ordered that a fast be held on the third Wednesday in every month for the duration of William's war in Ireland.<sup>117</sup> This was discontinued by an order of the 1st October 1690, because the King's success on the Boyne call for gratitude rather than humiliation, but the idea of monthly fasting was revived the next year to cover the summer campaigning against France.<sup>118</sup> Fasts were held on the third Wednesday of each month from April to October 1691.<sup>119</sup> Monthly fasts were repeated the following year between April and October, and in 1693 the only changes were that the fasting season did not begin until May, and that the day was moved to the second Wednesday in each month.<sup>120</sup> 1694 did not see monthly fasts, but two special days of public humiliation for the war were called on 23rd May and 29 August (in London - fourteen

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<sup>115</sup> Doebner, Memoirs ... Mary, p.14

<sup>116</sup> William III and Mary II, By the King and Queen, A proclamation for a general fast, ... given 23 May 1689, (London, 1689).

Both Tenison and Wake preached before the House of Commons on the day. Thomas Tenison, A sermon against self-love &c. preached before the Honourable House of Commons on 5th June 1689 being the fast day, (London, 1689); William Wake, A sermon preach'd before the Honourable House of Commons at St Margaret's Westminster, June 5th 1689, being the fast day, (London, 1689)

<sup>117</sup> William III and Mary II, By the King and Queen, a proclamation for a general fast, ... given 20 February 1689, (London, 1689)

<sup>118</sup> William III and Mary II, By the King and Queen, a proclamation, ... given 1 October 1690, (London, 1690)

<sup>119</sup> William III and Mary II, By the King and Queen, a proclamation for a general fast, ... given 9 April 1691, (London, 1691).

<sup>120</sup> William III and Mary II, By the King and Queen, a proclamation for a general fast, ... given 24 March 1692, (London, 1692). William III and Mary II, By the King and Queen, a proclamation for a general fast, ... given 13 April 1693, (London, 1693).

days later in the provinces).<sup>121</sup> After Mary's death the frequency of humiliations declined, but further individual fasts for the war were held in 1695, 1696 and 1697.<sup>122</sup>

This endless round of national humiliation was not as concentrated as the activity William induced in Ireland, where weekly fasts were ordered for a short period in 1690, but it was still the most intense period of fasting England had seen since the 1640s.<sup>123</sup> Neither Charles, nor James had used public days of humiliation to anything like the same extent. Apart from the summer of 1665, when God was to be propitiated to stop the plague, neither monarch had used monthly fasts, and there were long periods in their reigns (between 1660 and 1665, 1666 and 1672, the mid 1670s, and after 1680) when there had been no extraordinary fasts at all. It is true that Charles and James were not so often at war as William, and that war, along with natural disaster, was the usual stimulant for national humiliation in the seventeenth century. Yet even when Charles had been at war - with the Dutch from 1665-1667, and from 1672-1674 - he had not used monthly fasting, but had contented himself with one day in the spring. In 1674 even this had been omitted: so William's was a new and remarkable policy.

The new King's thanksgivings for blessings were not quite as punishing as his humiliations. In the hardships of war, the regime had rather less occasion to show gratitude than to fast. Nevertheless, the regime did hold a significant number of thanksgivings in the 1690s,

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<sup>121</sup> William III and Mary II, By the King and Queen, a proclamation for a general fast, ... given 10 May 1694, (London, 1694); William III and Mary II, By the King and Queen, a proclamation for a general fast, ... given 16 August 1694, (London, 1694).

<sup>122</sup> By the Lords Justices, a proclamation for a general fast, ... given 23 May 1695, (London, 1695); By the Lords Justices, a proclamation for a general fast, ... given 23 May 1696, (London, 1696); William III, By the King, a proclamation for a general fast, ... given 18 March 1696/7, (London, 1696/7).

<sup>123</sup> For the order for weekly fasts in Ireland (suspended a month later after the battle of the Boyne) see William III and Mary II, By the King and Queen's Most Excellent Majesties, a proclamation for a fast, ... given 1 August 1690, (Dublin, 1690). For discussion of fasts and thanksgivings in the 1640s, see Christopher Durston, "'For the better humiliation of the people': public days of fasting and thanksgiving during the English Revolution, (unpublished seminar paper, read at the Institute of Historical Research Tudor and Stuart seminar, London, spring term, 1990).

being particularly careful to ensure that each of its major military victories, and the safe end of difficult military seasons, were followed by a national expression of gratitude.<sup>124</sup> Extra occasions were also staged to mark the conclusion of peace in 1697, and the discovery of a plot against William's life in 1696.<sup>125</sup> When added to the fasts, this meant that none of William's first nine years in power passed without at least five national solemnities designed to illustrate the monarch's reforming mission.

Fast and thanksgiving were not only frequent, however. They were also meticulously planned to ram home courtly reformation ideology with the greatest possible force. William's propagandists spent much time and care preparing the events, and attempting to maximise their impact amongst the public. Their organisation in 1692 illustrates the efforts that must have been made year after year to ensure the success of the campaign.

In 1692, the first problem facing the Williamite bishops was to decide when to hold the year's events. A letter from Tillotson to Burnet revealed the detailed consideration given in the Privy Council to the question of when to start the series of summer fasts. The archbishop reported that Mary had initially fixed upon the 13th April as the first fast. However,

when the proclamation was brought to the council, it was objected that the 13th was the first day of the Term. The 20th was proposed; but that was thought not so convenient, because some action abroad might happen sooner. Then it was brought back to the 8th.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> See for example William III and Mary II, By the King and Queen ... proclamation ... 1 October 1690 - to give thanks for the battle of the Boyne; William III and Mary II, By the King and Queen, a proclamation for a publick thanksgiving, ... given 22 October 1691, (London, 1691) - to give thanks for the preservation of the King in Flanders and successes in Ireland; William III and Mary II, By the King and Queen, a proclamation for a publick thanksgiving, ... given 2 November 1693, (London, 1693) for success in Flanders.

<sup>125</sup> William III, By the King, a proclamation for a publick thanksgiving, ... given 11 November 1697, (London, 1697); William III, By the King, a proclamation for a publick thanksgiving, ... given 12 March 1696, (London, 1697).

<sup>126</sup> Birch, Life ... Tillotson, p.291 - Tillotson to Burnet, 12th April, 1692.



This early date was confirmed on the 24th March, but in May a military victory caused further problems of timing. Admiral Russell inflicted a heavy defeat on the French fleet at La Hogue, and the question arose as to whether to greet it with a public thanksgiving. The Queen again consulted with her clerical allies and noted that she waited

to hear what success we had in Flanders before I would have a publick thancksgiving for our victory. I thought, and so did severall Bishops, we must stay for that, and so did for, I believe, a fortnight together at least, every hour expecting to hear of a battel.<sup>127</sup>

Mary's concern with the staging of such events was further underlined when no such military success materialised, and the La Hogue thanksgiving was put back to the end of campaigning in October.<sup>128</sup> The Queen blamed herself for missing the opportunity for a national sign of gratitude, and believed that political rancour over the summer was a direct result of her indecision.<sup>129</sup>

Once the basic date and occasion for the fasts had been decided, the chief tasks were to advertise them, choose the speakers for the prestigious pulpits at court and Parliament, and compose a form of prayers. Officially, the bishops were given the last of these jobs by the Privy Council.<sup>130</sup> In 1692, however, Tillotson was so certain that there would be a series of fasts in the summer, that he had the office composed and printed over a month before the Council requested it.<sup>131</sup> Once the supplications had been written, they were published and sent out to the clergy of every parish. In 1692, as was usual, they followed closely the daily liturgy in the Book of Common Prayer; but certain passages were added or replaced to emphasise the tenets of courtly

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<sup>127</sup> Doebner, Memoirs ... Mary, p.51.

<sup>128</sup> William III and Mary II, By the King and Queen, a proclamation for a publick thanksgiving, ... given the 22nd October, 1692, (London, 1692).

<sup>129</sup> Doebner, Memoirs ... Mary, p.51.

<sup>130</sup> The fast and thanksgiving proclamations called on the bishops to write a form of prayers for the occasion. For a typical example of their involvement in this stage of the preparations see Public Record Office PC2 74/149 - the register of the Privy Council for 9th April 1691.

<sup>131</sup> Birch, Life ... Tillotson, p.291.

reformation. The form of prayer for the first Williamite fast in 1689, had replaced the collect for the day with one outlining England's national history, and asking God to stimulate repentance now that the English had been rescued from popery.<sup>132</sup> The 1692 form of prayer was similar in tone, and included a new supplication to be said on the coming fast day, and "constantly" whilst the King was abroad. It read

Almighty and most gracious God, who hast been our Deliverer in the day of our Distress, and hast called up thy Servant King WILLIAM to be the happy Instrument of our Deliverance: ... We humbly beseech thee still to continue him under the merciful Ease and Protection of thy good Providence, ... And likewise to give us Grace to be worthy of these Mercies in all thankful Obedience to thee, and in dutiful Subjection to their Majesties, whom thou hast set over us.<sup>133</sup>

Whilst these prayers were composed, the Attorney General was told to draught the proclamation which would officially announce the fast. This document explained the occasion for the coming solemnities, and expressed the monarchs' personal concern that their nation take the opportunity offered to amend their lives. The 1692 proclamation explained how the fast could help the war and requested that William's subjects do their part to secure divine favour on his enterprise.<sup>134</sup> Once finished, the proclamation was distributed through the usual channels, giving the monarch's hopes and motives a wide audience.

Meanwhile, Burnet's circle was arranging who would preach before the court and Parliament, and so set the tone for the day. On the 31st May, whilst the Queen was deciding about a thanksgiving for La Hogue, the Earl of Nottingham wrote to Burnet. He expressed the hope that the bishop would recover from a recent illness, because the Queen wanted him to give the sermon at Whitehall when Russell's naval victory was celebrated.<sup>135</sup> Burnet had given the court sermon on the previous two thanksgivings, and was becoming the automatic choice for the job. He

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<sup>132</sup> A form of prayer to be used on 5th June coming, being the fast day, (London, 1689).

<sup>133</sup> A form of prayer to be used on Friday the eighth day of April next ... being the fast day, (London, 1692).

<sup>134</sup> By the King, ... proclamation ... 24 March 1692

<sup>135</sup> Bodleian Additional Ms. A 191, f.107 - Nottingham to Burnet, 31st May, 1692.

prepared an address, but also showed a canny concern for public opinion, telling the Queen that if he performed again "it would look as if nobody else was willing to perform that office."<sup>136</sup> Mary saw the strength of this point, and when the thanksgiving day was finally held, Tillotson went to the Whitehall pulpit.<sup>137</sup>

When the fast days arrived, the public authorities were instructed to see that everybody observed them, punishment being threatened against those who "shall contemn or neglect so religious a work."<sup>138</sup> Normal working was suspended (on pain of prosecution) and the bishops made certain that their clergy provided the public worship and sermons prescribed.<sup>139</sup> After the fast days, the men of Burnet's circle published some of their pulpit oratory to remind the nation of the lessons of these occasions. The first of the crop in 1692, Simon Patrick's Sermon preached before the Queen at Whitehall, the 8th April, repeated the (by now tedious?) gospel that 1688 had given the English a royally-inspired opportunity to repent.<sup>140</sup>

Of course, it is hard to assess what effect such efforts by the bishops had. No historian can be sure how seriously ordinary Englishmen took William and Mary's fasts, and whether they absorbed the ideology which lay behind them. It is always possible that the solemnities were extensively evaded, or that people who participated were merely happy to have a day off work. Certainly, many clerics preaching on fast days complained that these national humiliations were not being properly

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<sup>136</sup> Gilbert Burnet, Some sermons preached on several occasions, (London, 1713), preface, p.xxii.

<sup>137</sup> John Tillotson, A sermon preached before the King and Queen at Whitehall, October 27, being the day appointed for the publick thanksgiving, (London, 1692).

<sup>138</sup> By the King, ... proclamation ... 24 March 1692

<sup>139</sup> Luttrell, Brief relation, vol.2, p.513 reports that several men playing bowls on the fast day on the 13th July had been fined 6s 8d each, and one sent to prison, by London magistrates.

Simon Patrick, The bishop of Ely's letter to the clergy of his diocese, (London, 1692), p.7, warned negligent clergy about not organising fasts in their parishes.

<sup>140</sup> Simon Patrick, A sermon preach'd before the Queen at Whitehall, the 8th April 1692, being the fast day appointed to implore God's blessing on Their Majesties persons, (London, 1692).



observed. However, since the point of pulpit oratory on these occasions was to berate a sinful nation to repentance, clerics were hardly likely to praise the population for its piety and diligence. When the structure of their rhetoric required, the men of Burnet's circle were quite capable of suggesting that fasting was going splendidly. In the autumn of 1690, for instance, Burnet himself wished to prove that the humiliations of the summer had resulted in the King's success in Ireland. He accordingly opined,

We have been this last Summer frequently brought together to fast and pray for Success and Victory ... We have never seen a more solemn Observation, as to all outward appearance, of such Days as was on those monthly Returns; and tho many were very bare-faced in their neglect of them, and others that should have animated the Publick Zeal, were extream cold in the observance of them, yet much earnestness and fervour showed itself in many places.<sup>141</sup>

Anecdotal evidence tends to back Burnet in this mood. According to some eye witness reports, the early fasts were kept "very strictly" in London.<sup>142</sup> A leading diarist of the period, Narcissus Luttrell, noted how the town regularly shut up shop on the humiliations and thanksgivings.<sup>143</sup> Lady Russell found she could withdraw from society on fast days without being missed by her acquaintances, and an incident early in the decade suggests that the fasts generated genuine popular enthusiasm.<sup>144</sup> There was some confusion in the autumn of 1690 about when the fasts would be suspended for the winter. In September, some of the London clergy assumed the series of humiliations had finished, but the capital's population was less sure. Richard Laphorne reported

Wednesday last was the day for our Monthly Fast and the people generally did shut up their shops intending to goe to

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<sup>141</sup> Gilbert Burnet, A sermon preached before the King and Queen at White-hall on 19th day of October, 1690, being the day of thanksgiving for His Majesties preservation and success in Ireland, (London, 1690), pp.33-4

<sup>142</sup> Singer, Correspondence ... Clarendon, vol.2, p.313

<sup>143</sup> Luttrell, Brief relation, vol.1, p.542; vol.2, pp.20, 45, 217, 301-2, 603.

<sup>144</sup> Letters ... Lady Russell, p.299 - Lady Russell to Dr.Fitzwilliam, 21st July, 1692

church but the church doors were shut the Clergy having determined the fast bee at an end.<sup>145</sup>

The fact that some of the published sermons became bestsellers, also indicates a degree of real popularity.<sup>146</sup> The fasts and thanksgivings were certainly successful enough for Jacobites to wish to combat them. Some mocked, disrupted, or wrote against them.<sup>147</sup> Others, like the Earl of Clarendon, could only stage a retreat into the depths of their households.<sup>148</sup>

Even without such explicit evidence for the success of national solemnities, it is pretty certain that more people experienced reforming initiatives in the 1690s through the official programme of fasts and thanksgivings than through any other means. This series of events was the most systematic initiative to improve morals taken in William's reign. Fasts and thanksgivings were compulsory, regular activities, backed by the coercive and publicising institutions of Church and state. They would reach far more people than any local or voluntary campaigns to correct manners. John Evelyn was a religious man, deeply concerned about national vice and always interested in means to correct it. Yet his diary noted and reflected upon national fasts and thanksgivings long before it recorded such initiatives as the societies for reformation of manners.<sup>149</sup> When most people encountered reformation under William, they met it in court-sponsored days of humiliation and gratitude. Fasts and

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<sup>145</sup> Kerr and Duncan, Routledge papers, p.85.

<sup>146</sup> John Sharp, A sermon preached before the Honourable House of Commons at St Margaret's Westminster, Wednesday 21 May, 1690 being the day of the monthly-fast, (London, 1690); and Edward Fowler, A sermon preached at Bow-Church April the xivth 1690; before the Lord Maior and Court of Aldermen, and citizens of London being the fast day, (London, 1690), both made more than one edition.

<sup>147</sup> Monod, Jacobitism, p.122.

<sup>148</sup> Singer, Correspondence ... Clarendon, vol.2, p.318

<sup>149</sup> Evelyn did not note the existence of the reformation societies in his diary until 24th November 1699. By this date he had been attending services on fast days, and noting the preachers and their messages, for the previous decade. See for example de Beer, Kalerendium, vol 4, pp.640-1; vol 5, pp.14, 21, 23, 24, 34, 51, 53, 58, 60-1, 94, 100, 109.

thanksgivings were perhaps the most potent weapon in the regime's reformation barrage.

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Burnet's bishops did not have the field entirely to themselves. In the 1690s, there were a variety of initiatives for reformation launched independently of the court. The regime's propagandists could not necessarily ensure that all these stayed within the Williamite political fold. However, in at least one set of cases, Burnet's men were able to appropriate independent movements. In their final courtly reformation initiative, the bishops managed to erect an umbrella of royal patronage over the various campaigns to strengthen and enforce England's statutes against vice.

The reign of William III saw numerous attempts to reform manners by the imposition of a strict legal code. Most of these resulted from the enthusiasm of independent gentlemen. As early as December 1688, the self-publicising clergyman, Edward Stephens, drafted a proclamation against vice. It called for the enforcement of the existing statutes against such offenses as drunkenness, prostitution and profane swearing. Stephens claimed to have presented his production to the Prince of Orange as His Highness advanced on London, but had been disappointed that the Dutch camp had shown little interest in its contents.<sup>150</sup> By May 1689, Sir Richard Bulkeley, an Irish baronet, had joined Stephens in lobbying the new government. Bulkeley too drafted orders against vice, and also hoped that William would endorse them with his authority.<sup>151</sup> In 1691, these two projectors, enthused by a local drive against bawdy houses in Tower Hamlets, set up the first society for reformation of manners. Based in Westminster, this body urged its members to inform magistrates of drunks, profane swearers and prostitutes; printed blank warrants for the arrest of miscreants; and financed prosecutions of debauched offenders. By the end of the decade, the society's model had

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<sup>150</sup> [Edward Stephens], A specimin of a declaration against debauchery, tendered to the consideration of His Highness, the Prince of Orange, (London, 1688).

<sup>151</sup> Craig, Reformation of manners, p.10-11.



been copied all over the country.<sup>152</sup> In the same period, local magistrates launched their own campaigns against vice.<sup>153</sup> Active JPs such as Sir Ralph Hartley in Middlesex, or Sir Richard Cocks in Gloucestershire, imposed the full rigours of the English law against debauchees under their jurisdiction.<sup>154</sup> The Mayor and Aldermen of London also began to crack down.<sup>155</sup> In addition, independent gentlemen took the lead in calling for more and tougher statutes against vice. In the 1697/8 session of Parliament, backbenchers rallied behind attempts by Sir John Phillips to enact a comprehensive programme of measures against blasphemy, profanity, and debauchery.<sup>156</sup>

In these campaigns, the historian faces the ideological and political confusions of the reformation movements in the 1690s. Amongst the babble of initiatives, it is difficult to sustain the claim that the court retained its leadership. This is particularly true, since not all the men involved in reforming activities acknowledged the regime as their inspiration. Most of those attempting to purge England through its law were Williamite in the sense that they saw 1688 as a providentially-provided opportunity to make their attempt. Edward Stephens stated this

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<sup>152</sup> The original account of the societies is [Josiah Woodward], An account of the societies for reformation of manners, in London and Westminster, and other parts of the kingdom, (London, 1699). Modern histories can be found in Garnet V. Portus, Caritas Anglicana: or, an historical inquiry into those religious and philanthropical societies that flourished in England between the years 1678 and 1720, (London, 1912); and the works mentioned this chapter, note 7.

<sup>153</sup> The earliest off the mark were a group of Westminster JPs including Robert Fielding and John Ward, active in the winter of 1689-90. Shoemaker, Prosecution and punishment, pp.238-9.

<sup>154</sup> For Hartley, see Craig, "Reformation of manners", p.26, 43; for Cocks, see David Hayton, "Sir Richard Cocks", pp.236-7.

<sup>155</sup> See City of London Record Office PD 10.91 - an order by the Lord Mayor for the suppression of vice, 19th November, 1689; Rep.95 ff.310, 318, 321-4 - orders to put the laws against vice in execution, July/August 1691; Rep.98, ff. 304-5 - similar orders in May 1694; Rep.97, ff.153-161 - an order of 24th February, 1692 for sabbath observation and suppression of vice.

<sup>156</sup> For Phillips' bills see Public Record Office SP 32 9 ff 333-334; SP 32 10 ff 3, 23-4, 65, 202. These documents are clearly reports to the King on independently proposed legislation. For support by backbenchers from the Harley family at least, see British Library Loan Ms 29/186 f.225; 29/189 f.21, 67.

explicitly.<sup>157</sup> However, the reformers were not always impeccably loyal to William's administration and policy. In fact, their very existence posed an acute danger for royal propagandists. In the first place, private initiatives might cast doubt on the court as the chief source of national renewal. More disturbingly, independent reformers tended to have a higher loyalty to their moral ideal, than to the Orange regime. They were prepared to judge the court according to its record of helping God's cause, and could criticise the government when they found it wanting. There was thus a real risk that William's subjects might prove more zealous for reform than his administration, and that the King might be hoisted by his own petard.

The capacity for trouble was shown early. Edward Stephens, perhaps smarting from the neglect of his specimen declaration, complained that little was done in the first years of William's reign to institute a legal campaign for public virtue. He had a point. Before 1691, the court's only move in this area had been to issue a letter from William to the bishop of London, ordering all clergy to read out the statutes against vice.<sup>158</sup> In a series of works published between 1689 and 1691 Stephens complained about this lack of action and warned that debauched and powerful factions at court were blocking legislation to curb sin.<sup>159</sup> Even the bishops fell under suspicion as Stephens issued dark warnings that the King and Queen themselves might fall victim to the prevailing corruption.<sup>160</sup> The late 1690s saw more rumblings from the independent reformers. By the end of the decade the societies for reformation of

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<sup>157</sup> For example in [Edward Stephens], An act for the more effectual restraining and suppressing divers and notorious sins, and reformation of manners of the people of this nation, (London, 1689).

<sup>158</sup> William III, His Majesties letter to the Lord bishop of London, to be communicated to the two provinces of Canterbury and York, (London, 1689).

<sup>159</sup> [Edward Stephens], A plain relation of the late action at sea, between the English and the Dutch, and the French fleets from June 22 to July 5 Last, (London, 1689); [Edward Stephens], An admonition concerning a publick fast, (London, 1691); [Edward Stephens], An appeal to earth and heaven against the Christian Epicureans, who have betrayed their King and countrey, (London, 1691).

<sup>160</sup> For reflections upon the bishops, see [Stephens], Plain relation, p.30-32; Admonition concerning a fast, p.3.

manners in London and Westminster were publishing quarterly sermons to act as publicity for their movement. Many of these worried that little progress was being made in rolling back vice, and expressed suspicion of the men in whom William had placed trust. Sermon after reformation sermon spoke of wholesale neglect amongst magistrates, and the poor moral example set by those in positions of authority. One address, by John Woodhouse in 1697, openly criticised the court. Woodhouse talked of a "false step" taken in the early months of the regime. In 1689, he claimed, debauched politicians had persuaded William to settle the government before tackling national manners, so that "little was at first done to reform the court, city, country, army, navy, magistracy, and ministry." Only the bench of assize judges had been effectively purged and the task of reformation had been entrusted to those who wished it thwarted.<sup>161</sup>

Such evidence suggests that William's propagandists had lost control of the legal campaign for reformation in the 1690s. However, these instances of trouble should be balanced by the activities of the bishops. Through the decade, Burnet, Tillotson and the others managed to limit damage to the royal cause by virtuoso tiger-riding. As the campaign to strengthen and enforce the laws gathered pace, the court propagandists moved in to place the monarch at its head. They joined the movement, appropriated its rhetoric, and cut off potential criticism by proving the court's enthusiasm for statutory moral reform.<sup>162</sup>

The manoeuvring began in the second half of 1691. Soon after the formation of the first reformation society, Edward Stillingfleet came to patronise the body. He consulted with the association's leaders, and put pressure on Queen Mary to become their sponsor. The result of the bishop's initiative was a letter written by the Queen to the Middlesex justices. This encouraged the reformation society's work by requiring

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<sup>161</sup> John Woodhouse, A sermon preach'd at Salters Hall to the societies for reformation of manners May 31 1697, (London, 1697), pp.37-38. Woodhouse was speaking from a Whig perspective, and using reformation as part of an attack on the King's early reliance on Tories.

<sup>162</sup> Craig, "Reformation of manners", p.27. Mary II, Her Majesties gracious letter to the Justices of the Peace in the County of Middlesex July 9 1691 for the suppressing of prophaness and debauchery, (London, 1691).



the JPs to apply the statutes against vice, and asking ordinary men and women to bring offenses to the magistrates' notice. Later in the year, the court's propagandists again elicited royal action when the "pious address of our archbishops and bishops" produced a proclamation by William and Mary against vicious and debauched persons.<sup>163</sup> This asked all judges, justices, and constables to be diligent in enforcing the law, and again succoured the reformation society by stressing the need for action by all Their Majesties' subjects. The vigorous expansion of reformation movement in the late 1690s, and its efficient publicity, elicited more court response towards the end of the decade. William issued two further proclamations against vice in 1698 and 1699, and called for more laws to suppress debauchery in five speeches to Parliament between 1697 and 1699.<sup>164</sup> In 1701, addressing the legislature for the last time, the King returned to the theme, and again pressed legal remedies for national sin.<sup>165</sup> As the monarch did his bit, other propagandists worked to propagate and magnify his efforts. Edward Fowler, who maintained close links with the reformation societies, attempted to have them officially endorsed and collected signatures of fellow bishops on a paper commending their work.<sup>166</sup> Thomas Tenison responded to the King's 1699 speech to Parliament by sending out a letter to the clergy of his province giving advice on how best to achieve a "universal reformation". He advised ministers to form associations to combat debauchery, and to encourage their flock to

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<sup>163</sup> William III and Mary II, By the King and Queen, A proclamation against vitious, debauched and profane persons, ... given 21 January 1691/2, (London, 1691/2). BL Add Ms 70015, fol. 276 is a petition for the proclamation from thirteen bishops including Tillotson, Burnet, Patrick, Sharp, and Stillingfleet.

<sup>164</sup> William III By the King, ... proclamation ... 24 February 1697, William III, By the King, a proclamation for preventing and punishing immorality and prophaness, ... given 9 December 1699, (London, 1699). Journals ... House of Lords, vol.16, pp.175, 344, 352, 366, 476.

<sup>165</sup> Journals ... House of Lords, vol.17, p.6.

<sup>166</sup> Craig, "Reformation of manners", p.225. The endorsement of the societies, including Patrick's signature, appeared as a preface to the 1699 edition of Woodward, Account ... reformation of manners.

inform JPs of vicious offenders.<sup>167</sup> Gilbert Burnet approved Tenison's epistle, and added his endorsement of it in an appendix to the copies sent out in his Salisbury diocese. Secular politicians and officials were also involved. A paper read in 1699 by Secretary of State James Vernon to the Privy Council referred to Tenison's letter and told circuit judges to remind JPs of its content at assizes. Vernon also told these men to punish "vice and prophaness" on their rounds, and encourage local magistrates to do the same.<sup>168</sup>

The court's leadership of legal reformation was emphasised by efficient broadcasting of the above initiatives. Both Mary's letter to the Middlesex bench, and William's to Compton were published. The latter epistle was sent to every parish priest in the country, along with copies of the statutes which the clergy were to read out.<sup>169</sup> William's proclamations were sent out through the usual publicity machine, and in addition, contained the specific provision that they be read by all priests from the pulpit four times a year.<sup>170</sup> Assize judges were ordered to check that this was being done.<sup>171</sup> William's speeches to Parliament, especially those at the end of sessions, were similarly designed to transmit the court's enthusiasm for legal reform to the whole nation. They were published, and contained a request that Lords and MPs act as

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<sup>167</sup> Thomas Tenison, His Grace the Lord archbishop of Canterbury's letter to the Right Reverend the Lords bishops of his province, (London, 1699).

<sup>168</sup> PRO SP 32 11 ff.308-11 - this paper reports a meeting with the judges on 13th July.

Some historians would have John Sharp dissenting from his colleagues' strategy of endorsing legal reformation, because he opposed clerical involvement with the reformation societies, and voiced doubts about their methods. See Issacs "Moral crime", pp.186-7; Hart, Life and times ... Sharp, p.181. However, his anxiety centred on rather narrow points of ecclesiastical law. Once these had been dealt with, Sharp was prepared to endorse the societies objectives, and allowed his clergy to preach to the bodies, albeit on strict conditions. See Sharp, Life of Sharp, vol.1, pp.172-188.

<sup>169</sup> The letter stated "these statutes we have ordered to be printed, together with this letter, that they may be transmitted by you to every parish in the realm."

<sup>170</sup> William III, By the King, ... proclamation ..., given 24 February 1697.

<sup>171</sup> PRO Ms 32 11 ff. 310

carriers of royal ideology as they returned to their estates and constituencies. The legislators were asked to go back to their localities and be active "in all your several stations ... in a due and regular execution of the laws, especially those against prophaness and irreligion".<sup>172</sup>

This saturation coverage of the court's legal reformation headed off the worst dangers of the independent reformers' campaign. It established what might be called a "rhetorical field", in which potential criticism of the regime could be neutralised. Appropriating the independent reformers' polemic, the bishops associated the monarchs so closely with their cause, that it became difficult for the campaigners to call for godly rule without endorsing the court's position.

The process could be observed amongst reforming magistrates. When the Middlesex justices took action against vice in 1691, they thanked Queen Mary for her letter to them, and so presented their local action as an aspect of court policy.<sup>173</sup> The case was similar with the reformation societies. The royal letters, speeches and proclamations against vice were a powerful endorsement of these bodies' campaigns, which naturally found their way into their literature. As the societies drew attention to the royal action in their promotional publications, they automatically portrayed themselves as embodiments of the monarch's personal wishes. For example, the men involved in one of the first initiatives for the reformation of manners, the 1690 push against bawdy houses in Tower Hamlets, printed a broadside to advertise their campaign. The Hellenically-titled Antimoixeia, cited two stimulants to reforming action which originated at court.<sup>174</sup> The first was a proclamation for the apprehension of highwaymen (just issued by the King

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<sup>172</sup> Journals ... House of Lords, Vol.16, p.344.

<sup>173</sup> For a citation by local magistrates, see Middlesex Quarter Sessions, Mid.ss. Ad. General. Quateral Session [Public order respecting vice and immorality], (London, 1691) - this presented the Queen's letter to the magistrates as the stimulus for this order for the suppression of vice.

<sup>174</sup> Antimoixeia: or the honest and joynt-design of the Tower-Hamlets for the general suppression of bawdy houses, as encouraged thereto by the publick magistrates, (London, 1691).



and Queen), whilst the second was William's letter to Bishop Compton. When the societies were founded, they too cited royal literature in support of their actions. Their sermons and pamphlets constantly referred to a canon of court documents: most especially the Queen's Middlesex letter, the proclamations and the King's speeches to Parliament.<sup>175</sup> So keen were the societies to quote this material, that they effectively became part of the Williamite propaganda machine. In 1691 it was the first society, which was responsible for the wide distribution of the Queen's letter.<sup>176</sup> They paid for its printing and sent it out to the provinces. Later in the decade, the societies provided a platform for leading court spokesmen. Gilbert Burnet and Edward Fowler were invited to preach before the bodies, and the addresses they delivered, full of the royal concern for reformation, were published at the members' request.<sup>177</sup>

The propagandists' attempts to place the monarchs at the head of legal reformation were particularly impressive when they neutralised suggestions that royal efforts had been inadequate. As has been seen, criticism of the court was a disturbing undercurrent in reform movements of the 1690s. The royal propagandists recognised this, and fashioned a rhetorical response to cope with the problem. Their approach is evident in the wording of proclamations. The texts of the William's orders

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<sup>175</sup> For example, [Woodward], Account ... societies for reformation of manners, opened with full transcripts of William's 1697 proclamation, and Mary's letter to the Middlesex magistrates. [Josiah Woodward], An account of the progress of the reformation of manners in England, Scotland and Ireland, (London, 1701), p.9, mentioned a booklet entitled A help to reformation, which gave rules for setting up a reformation society. This too led with William's proclamation. The Bishop of Gloucester defended the societies from the accusation that they behaved as an inquisition by quoting Queen Mary's Middlesex letter in [Edward Fowler], A vindication of an undertaking of certain gentlemen, in order to the suppressing of debauchery and profaness, (London, 1692)

<sup>176</sup> Woodward, Account ... of the religious societies, p.70-1.

<sup>177</sup> Gilbert Burnet, Charitable reproof: a sermon preached at St Mary-le-Bow to the societies for reformation of manners, 25 March 1700, (London, 1700); Edward Fowler, A sermon preached at St Mary le Bow to the societies for reformation of manners, June 26, 1699, (London, 1699). The societies' sent their sermons out to the provinces and distributed them widely, see William Hayley, A sermon preach'd at the church of St. Mary le Bow before the societies for reformation of manners, upon Monday October 3, 1698, (London, 1699), preface.

against vice were largely formulaic. They borrowed much of their phraseology from documents previously produced by Charles and James.<sup>178</sup> However, the proclamations issued after 1688 contained two significant innovations. First, they expressed pessimism about the progress of official reformation. Whilst Charles' third proclamation against vice had spoken of his pleasure that his first was having such a good effect; William's edicts were far more gloomy, expressing "resentment" that "impiety, prophaness and immorality do still abound in this our kingdom".<sup>179</sup> Second, William was prepared to blame negligent magistrates for the continuance of sin. Both he and James noted "frequent and repeated instances of dissolute living", but only William went on to state that these had

in great Measure been occasioned by the Neglect of the Magistrates not putting into Execution those good Laws which have been made for Suppressing and Punishing thereof, and by the ill Example of many in Authority.<sup>180</sup>

These innovations were designed to deal with the regime's detractors. They formed part of a wider strategy, in which the monarchs admitted shortcomings in their legal reformation, so that the court could place

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<sup>178</sup> Both Charles and James had issued proclamations against vice, though only at moments of political expediency. Charles' proclamations were Charles II, A proclamation against vicious, debauch'd and prophane persons by the King, ... given 30 May, 1660, (London, 1660); Charles II, By the King, a proclamation for publishing a former proclamation of 30th May last ... in all churches and chappels throughout England and Wales, ... given 30 August, 1660, (London, 1660); Charles II, By the King, a proclamation for the suppressing of disorderly and unseasonable meetings, ... given 20 September, 1660, (London, 1660) - this contained passages against tippling, alehouses and drunkenness; Charles II, By the King, a proclamation for the observation of the Lord's Day, and for renewing a former declaration against vicious, debauched and profane persons, ... given 22 August 1663, (London, 1663). Charles' edicts thus all dated from the very beginning of his reign, and were aimed chiefly at securing order in the streets of London, and countering suggestion his party was morally lax - see the proclamations of 13th May 1660 and 20th September 1660. James issued, James II, By the King, a proclamation, ... given 29 June 1688, (London, 1688) as his contribution to moral reform. This dated from period when the King wanted to ally with dissenters against Anglican opposition, and may have been intended win their support.

<sup>179</sup> Charles II, By the King ... proclamation ... given 20 September 1660; William III, By the King ... proclamation ... given 24 February 1697.

<sup>180</sup> James II, By the king, ... proclamation ... given 29 June 1688; William III, By the king, ... proclamation ... given 24 February 1697.

itself at the head of its own critics. If the regime could acknowledge that its crusade had met with limited success, and that certain royal servants seemed to be blocking its progress, it might moderate complaint by seeming to concur with it. The King and Queen's image as zealous reformers might be preserved, as the monarchs were shown to share the prevailing concern about their failure. It was in accordance with this strategy that Mary's letter to the Middlesex bench warned of JPs who "refused or neglected to discharge the duty of [their] place", and that William's closing speech to Parliament in 1699 had expressed disappointment at how little progress had been made towards new virtuous laws.<sup>181</sup>

In certain cases this rhetorical gambit was brilliantly effective. Some society activists who had been worried by the government's reluctance to join in reformation, were able to express their anxiety in words borrowed from court propaganda. For instance, the author of the Account of the progress of the reformation of manners, (1701), talked of recalcitrance amongst magistrates; but was able to illustrate his point by citing the proclamation of 1697 which had talked of "the negligence of magistrates in the execution of their office, and their ill example".<sup>182</sup> What might have been an attack on William's choice of servants was therefore transformed into an endorsement of the King's sentiments. Even Edward Stephens and John Woodhouse were convinced by royal suggestions that vicious officials were obstructing William and Mary's designs, and accepted that the monarchs themselves were sound on reform. Stephens greeted Mary's Middlesex letter as evidence that the corrupt remnant at court had been defeated and that true royal reformation would begin.<sup>183</sup> Woodhouse attacked the court's early apathy, but he cleared William and Mary personally of blame. After the initial mistake of relegating reformation amongst official priorities, Woodhouse argued

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<sup>181</sup> Mary II, Her Majesties gracious letter; Journals ... House of Lords, vol.16, p.466.

<sup>182</sup> An account of the progress of the reformation of manners in England and Ireland, (London, 1701), p.37.

<sup>183</sup> [Edward Stephens], The beginnings and progress of a needful and hopeful reformation in England, (London, 1691), p.7.



there were vigorous overtures made, by our excellent King, and Nonsuch Queen, to retrieve this false step: I need not recite their vigorous Application, to Officers Sacred, and Civil; but how their, and our reasonable Hopes, were totally baffled, I need not say.<sup>184</sup>

The rhetorical field created by courtly reformation had thus once again deflected criticism of the new government, and implicated independent gentlemen in Williamite propaganda.

## VI

Of course, courtly reformation did not have uncontested control of public discourse. Jacobites and non-jurors openly mocked the idea that a regime born in the sins of treachery, usurpation and perjury could possibly be an engine of virtue. They constructed an alternative image of William's court as a sink of depravity, forced to bribe and corrupt a nation it had no legitimate claim to rule. In 1695, non-jurors launched a particularly fierce assault on the recently deceased Tillotson and Mary; contradicting official funeral orations which eulogised their efforts for reformation.<sup>185</sup> Even if such polemic converted few to James' cause, other writers remained deeply cynical about the court's crusade. Several presented the entire moral enterprise as an excuse for joyless and hypocritical interference in private lives. Exploiting a situation in which many Englishmen must have encountered reformation as persecuted victims, rather than as enthusiastic adherents, they questioned the motivation behind the whole escapade.<sup>186</sup> In particular, tracts written against the societies accused reformers of either reviving the mid-

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<sup>184</sup> Woodhouse, Sermon ... reformation of manners, p.37.

<sup>185</sup> See Thomas Ken, A letter to Dr. Tenison upon the occasion of a sermon entitled "A sermon preached at the funeral of Queen Mary", (London, [1695]); [Charles Leslie], Remarks on some late sermons, (London, 1695).

<sup>186</sup> Bodleian Rawlinson Ms. D 1396, is a register book of warrants issued by magistrates on information supplied by the societies for the prosecution of vicious individuals. It lists numbers of ordinary subjects - victuallers, barbers, bakers, butchers, coachmen, stewards, labourers, watchmen, blacksmiths, coalheavers and haberdashers - proceeded against for Sunday trading, drinking and swearing.

century puritan terror, or unjustly torturing the poor.<sup>187</sup> Perhaps the best example of this critical genre is a pamphlet play of 1698, The puritanical justice, which deserves to be better known. It attacked the reforming magistrates of London for using religious zeal to hide their own sin, and becoming so crazed with enthusiasm that they subverted the social order. At the height of the crusade, the work portrayed the wives of respectable citizens locked up with common prostitutes.<sup>188</sup>

Yet in spite of such challenges to its ideological hegemony, the campaign of courtly reformation remains impressive. Burnet's message had soaked the nation in one of the most intensive, comprehensive, and coordinated torrents of publicity ever released by an English government. As a result, many Englishmen had become involved in a struggle for national renewal, and had come to recognise the court as their lead and inspiration in the fight.

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<sup>187</sup> See The modern fanatical reformer, or the religious state tinker, (London, 1693); The mystery of phanaticism, or the artifices of the dissenters to support their schism, (London, 1698); The poor man's plea, in relation to all the proclamations, declarations, acts of Parliament &c, which have been ... for a reformation of manners, (London, 1698); Reformation of manners: a satyr, ([London], 1702).

<sup>188</sup> The puritanical justice: or the beggars turn'd thieves. A farce as it was late acted about the City of London, (London, 1698).

## SECTION TWO

## Introduction

The Uses of Courtly Reformation

## I

On the 31st December, 1701, William III went to Westminster to deliver his last speech to Parliament. Two months later, a rodent would succeed where Jacobite plotters had failed, and the King would die after his horse had stumbled over a molehill in Hyde Park. William's last speech was given nearly thirteen years after he had first addressed the legislature, but in that time the royal message had changed little. The country was back in conflict with France, so William once again reviewed the international situation, and made his, by now repetitive, appeal for funds. For one last time he also rehearsed his claims for courtly reformation. Towards the end of his speech he hoped,

what Time can be spared, will be employed about those other very desirable Things, which I have so often recommended from the Throne; I mean, the forming of some good Bills, for employing the Poor, for encouraging Trade, and the further suppressing of Vice.<sup>1</sup>

Why did William persist with this language? Reformation rhetoric had emerged in 1688/9 to advance the Prince of Orange's claims to the English crown: why did he reaffirm it so tirelessly once that crown was on his head?

Clearly the continued presence of Jacobites necessitated a continuing assertion of the basic legitimacy of the Revolution. However, this factor alone does not account for the consistent effort put into the campaign. The survival of courtly reformation as the cornerstone of royal rhetoric must also be explained in the context of political problems which emerged only after the Revolution was complete.

Once James had been successfully displaced, the main task facing William was to ensure that the English played their full part in his war. As Prince of Orange, William had invaded England to bring her into his anti-French alliance. As King, the mobilisation of his new realm against Louis would remain his core objective. To achieve this aim,

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<sup>1</sup> Journals ... House of Lords, vol.17, p.6.



William had to persuade Parliament to support his policy. Although gaining the throne had brought the Prince control of England's foreign policy and armed forces, this meant little without the co-operation of the legislature. Failure to work with Parliament would not only cut off the vital supply of money to the military; it would also risk the sort of alienation of political elites which had destroyed William's predecessor. The King knew the power of a recalcitrant English Parliament. As Prince of Orange he had witnessed legislators destabilise two reigns, and in 1672-4 had himself exploited their power to cripple a royal war effort.<sup>2</sup> In the 1690s, William made the cultivation of Lords and Commons his chief concern after the battlefields of Flanders.<sup>3</sup>

Unfortunately, gaining parliamentary approval in the 1690s was not easy. Although William had some early successes (most importantly persuading the two Houses to back a declaration against France), tensions between monarch and parliamentarians soon began to rise. The King discovered that the burdens of war, coupled with the heritage of English history, undermined his attempts to work with his legislature. Heavy military and economic loss, combined with England's political traditions, put strains on the royal relationship with peers and MPs which would take consummate political skill, and effective propaganda, to overcome.

It is possible to isolate three main roots of William's difficulties with his Lords and Commons. The first was the tradition of anti-Dutch xenophobia. Despite England's role in the establishment of Holland's independence, the two countries had not been close in the late seventeenth century. Three wars, and a vigorous trade rivalry, had bred a deep mistrust of Hollanders amongst the English.<sup>4</sup> Steven Pinkus,

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<sup>2</sup> See K.H.D.Haley, William of Orange and the English opposition, 1672-4, (Oxford, 1953).

<sup>3</sup> William spent every winter in England, dealing with Parliament, despite his considerable political commitments in continental Europe. His movements can be traced in Baxter, William III. For the purposes of his forthcoming volume in the New Oxford History of England, Julian Hoppit has calculated that the monarch spent 57% of his time in England after 1688.

<sup>4</sup> See Jonathan Israel, Dutch primacy in world trade, 1585-1740, (Oxford, 1989), pp.197-300; Jonathan Israel, "Competing cousins: Anglo-Dutch trade rivalry", History Today, 38 (1988) July issue, pp.17-22.

studying English opinion during the three military conflicts, has discovered a widespread suspicion that the United Provinces were aiming at "universal monarchy". Portrayed as the heirs to the grasping Spanish empire of the sixteenth century, the Dutch were held to be brutal deceivers, who designed the engrossment of the world's wealth and the reduction of all other nations to dependent status. Despite a parallel fear of the Catholic and ambitious regime of Louis XIV, dislike of the Dutch could on occasion compete with francophobia and anti-popery as the basic English instinct.<sup>5</sup> Such sentiments did not bode well for a King who was Dutch by both birth and culture, and who wanted England to go to the defence of his countrymen. Dark complaint about Dutch troops in 1688, led to criticism of William's Dutch advisers, and bred legislative resentment at a war fought in Dutch interests.<sup>6</sup>

William's second difficulty was also an inheritance from the past. It was the legacy of bitterness between Whig and Tory. The English political nation had first divided into two warring parties in the Exclusion Crisis of the early 1680s. As that drama had unfolded, the term "Whig" had been applied to those who attempted to debar the Duke of York (the future James II) from the throne; whilst the tag "Tory" had been attached to those who opposed this attempt, and stood by the principle of indefeasible hereditary right.<sup>7</sup> However, although the constitutional issue of Exclusion had been the occasion for the crystallisation of parties; religious issues, dating back to the Restoration at least, were perhaps more important in defining the

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Charles Wilson, Profit and power: a study of England and the Dutch wars, (London, 1957)

<sup>5</sup> Steven C.A. Pinkus, "Popery, trade and universal monarchy: the ideological context of the outbreak of the second Anglo-Dutch war", English Historical Review, 107 (1992), pp.1-29. See also Harris, London crowds, pp.31, 201.

<sup>6</sup> See below, chapter 4, section I.

<sup>7</sup> See Robert Willman, "The origins of 'Whig' and 'Tory' in English political language", Historical Journal, 17 (1974) pp.247-264.

Recently some doubts have been expressed about the polarising effect of the Exclusion Crisis - especially in Jonathan Scott's ferocious attack on J.R. Jones's book, The first Whigs, (London, 1961) - see Scott, Algernon Sidney and the restoration crisis, section 1. Nonetheless, it is undeniable that two broad and opposed groupings did emerge during the crisis, or at least the years immediately following.

division. When Charles II had returned from exile in 1660, he had come with a scheme to end the confessional quarrels between Englishmen which had contributed to his father's downfall. He had suggested that, whilst the pre-Interregnum Church should be re-established, concessions should be made in its government and liturgy, to satisfy those who had objected to some of its forms in the 1640s. Unfortunately, the capture of Church and Parliament by Anglican hardliners had meant that such concessions were not to be forthcoming.<sup>8</sup> The Act of Uniformity in 1662 had led to "Black Bartholomew's Day", when those parish ministers who had served during the Interregnum, but could not accept the Church as re-imposed under Charles, were ejected from their livings.<sup>9</sup> These events created a body of "dissenting" clerics and their followers, who would pose the central political dilemma for Caroline Englishmen. In the early 1680s, debate about how to treat the considerable body of non-conformists helped to define the differences between the emerging political parties. Whilst the Tories coalesced around a rigid view, which wanted the schismatic sectarians eliminated and supported a persecuting legislative code to effect this; the Whigs drew on dissenting support, and campaigned for a toleration of non-conformity.<sup>10</sup> In fact, so strong was the religious polarisation between the two parties, that historians are coming to agree that confessional disagreements were the main cause of partisan division.<sup>11</sup> Matters of faith ensured that the two factions

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<sup>8</sup> C.G.Bolam ed., The English Presbyterians, (London, 1968), pp.73-78; Robert S.Bosher, The making of the Restoration settlement: the influence of the Laudians 1649-1662, (Westminster, 1951); Norman Sykes, From Sheldon to Secker: aspects of English Church history 1660-1768, (Cambridge, 1959), chapter one; Paul Seaward, The Cavalier Parliament and the reconstruction of the old regime, 1661-7, (Cambridge, 1989), pp.162-95; I.M.Green, The re-establishment of the Church of England, 1660-1663, (Oxford, 1978).

<sup>9</sup> Michael R.Watts, The dissenters: from the Reformation to the French Revolution, (Oxford, 1978), p.208-220; Bolam, English Presbyterians, pp.79-90.

<sup>10</sup> For the details of, and reaction to, the legislation passed against dissenters in the 1660s and 1670s, (usually, if misleadingly, referred to as the Clarendon code) see Watts, Dissenters, pp.221-7.

<sup>11</sup> The importance of religion in the formation of groups around which parties would crystallise is explored in Richard Davis, "The Presbyterian opposition and the emergence of party in the House of Lords in the reign of Charles II", in Clyve Jones ed., Party and management in Parliament, 1660-1784, (Leicester, 1984), pp.1-36; Mark Goldie, "Danby,



would gain extensive popular support, and fired a bitter, even bloody, power struggle, which was played out at both national and local level.<sup>12</sup>

All this posed a severe problem for William. When he came to the throne, he was faced, not only with a nation divided on its interpretation of the constitution, but one deeply fractured into rival religious camps. Such party divisions, and the legacy of hatred they had caused, would horribly complicate the new King's attempts to secure resources from Parliament.<sup>13</sup>

William's third problem was a deep suspicion of royal ministers and courtiers amongst England's political class. During the seventeenth century, "country" sentiment - a nagging mistrust of the executive and its ambitions - had become a characteristic element of the national psyche. It drew strength from mounting evidence that successive governments had been corrupted by the temptations of power, and had aimed to impose a tyrannical regime. The cumulative experience of Charles I's autocratic proclivities; of the luxury and double dealing of Charles II's government; and of James II's assault on traditional liberties; had led to the pessimistic conclusion that courts were full of immoral and extravagant men, who strove constantly to extend their authority beyond its legitimate bounds. In response to this conviction, a recognisable platform of country policies had been formulated. The

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the bishops and the Whigs", in Goldie et al, Politics of religion, pp.75-106. Mark Knights, "Politics and opinion during the Exclusion Crisis, 1678-81", (Oxford DPhil, 1989) demonstrates that the Exclusion Crisis was about far more than the single constitutional issue, but does not develop the religious aspects. Tim Harris, London crowds, shows that at street level, religion was essential to the formation of parties in the late 1670s and early 1680s. The cohesion of dissent as a political force through the Restoration period is explored in Douglas R.Lacey, Dissent and parliamentary politics in England, 1661-1689, (New Brunswick, NJ, 1969). One of the best short accounts of the religious dimension of party ideology is given in Mark Goldie, "John Locke and Anglican loyalism". Colin Lee, "'Fanatic magistrates': religious and political conflict in three Kent boroughs, 1680-1684", Historical Journal, 35 (1991), pp.43-61, shows how religious tensions fuelled party strife in the localities in the early 1680s.

<sup>12</sup> The virulence of party strife in the period is well surveyed in Paul Seaward, The Restoration, 1660-1688 (London, 1991), pp.101-142. See also J.R.Jones, Country and court: England 1658-1714 (London, 1978); David Ogg, England in the reign of Charles II, (Oxford, 1967).

<sup>13</sup> See below, chapter 5, section 1.

crucial period in the process was the 1670s when country-minded politicians in Parliament had begun to campaign (against court resistance) for a series of measures to control the damage a corrupt executive might do. These included limits on royal expenditure, better parliamentary scrutiny of government, resistance to standing armies, and guarantees against interference in the judiciary and legislature.<sup>14</sup>

Such a legacy of mistrust proved a major headache for William. When he came to the throne, he faced a country morbidly sensitive to administrative corruption and influence. Worse, some of its citizens had a long-term commitment to rein in his newly acquired powers. This was not an ideal situation for a monarch whose policy of vigorous war would require strong government, and would inevitably extend the state's activity. From 1689, William was faced with a series of struggles to maintain his position against a large group of country-leaning parliamentarians.<sup>15</sup>

These three problems help explain why courtly reformation was peddled so consistently by the Williamite regime. The rhetoric was retained because it could be adapted to address them. It could be developed into a case against parliamentary censure of the king's administration, and could be deployed as an encouragement to co-operation between legislature and executive. First, it could attempt to counter anti-Dutch xenophobia. Courtly reformation could be used to integrate a foreign ruler into the English nation.<sup>16</sup> Second, the language could be applied to the problem of partisan politics. It could attempt to lift William above the party issues of the 1690s by offering ideological concessions to both Whigs and Tories, and by appealing for disputes to be subsumed within the greater task of reformation.<sup>17</sup> Third, reformation could attempt to ease suspicion of the executive. It could

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<sup>14</sup> See K.H.D.Haley, The first Earl of Shaftesbury (Oxford, 1968), pp.348-371; J.R.Jones, Charles II: royal politician (London, 1987), pp.65-6; Andrew Browning, Thomas Osbourne: Earl of Danby and Duke of Leeds, 1632-1712, 3 vols (Glasgow, 1951), vol.1, part 2.

<sup>15</sup> See below, chapter 6, sections I and II.

<sup>16</sup> See below, chapter 4.

<sup>17</sup> See below, chapter 5.

form the rhetorical basis for a settlement between King and Parliament, in which legislators' worries could be acknowledged and addressed, without parliamentarians entering a ideological dispute with the court.<sup>18</sup> Courtly reformation was therefore repeated for more reasons than consistency with the propaganda of the invasion. It remained a living and vital language after 1688 because it promised to meet the rhetorical needs of the regime once it was installed.

## II

Although evidence from the 1690s can provide useful insights into why the court deployed reformation propaganda, it can only give an unsatisfactory answer to another obvious question about this rhetoric. Given the limited sources for political history under William, it is distressingly hard to assess how effectively the regime's language achieved its aims. A historian can state that William avoided a debilitating rift with Parliament, but cannot give a precise weight to reformation ideals in securing this result.

At first sight, evidence for the effectiveness of royal propaganda appears strong. Considering the circumstances of the 1690s, the post-Revolution monarchy was remarkably successful in working with Parliament. Despite its foreignness, the strains of war, and the legacy of English political dispute, the court's relations with the legislature never reached an impasse which interfered in the conduct of the war. Legislators were generous and innovative in providing funds for William's battles; they avoided pushing arguments with him to the point of constitutional crisis; and rarely subjected him to outright parliamentary defeat.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> See below, chapter 6.

<sup>19</sup> For Parliament's role in financing the war, see P.G.M. Dickson, The financial revolution in England: a study in the development of public credit, (London, 1967).

Perhaps the closest William and Parliament came to a constitutional crisis was the Commons anger over the royal veto of a place bill in January 1694. The House however, backed away from a provocative declaration that the King's answer to their protests was unsatisfactory. See below, p.275. No major political figure was impeached - attempts on the Duke of Leeds in 1695, and on Portland, Somers and Orford in 1701 both petered out, see Henry Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics in the reign of William III, (Manchester, 1977), pp.152; Dennis Rubini, Court and country, 1688-1702



Unfortunately, however, it is impossible to ascribe this royal triumph to the rhetoric of courtly reformation alone. Although royal polemic may well have won over many parliamentarians, it is very easy to conceive other possible explanations for their co-operation. They could, for instance, have been considering their own self-interest. Having secured positions of profit or influence after 1688, or merely having co-operated with the post-revolutionary regime, they may have been frightened of the personal consequences of undermining William. The return of James would have been a most unwelcome prospect for men who were doing well with his rival. Similarly, parliamentarians may have been motivated by ideologies unconnected with reformation propaganda. They might, for instance, have been influenced by the surviving discourse of an ancient and free constitution, and might have wanted to co-operate with the King in the belief that William was that constitution's defender.<sup>20</sup> The old idea that open opposition to a King was treason could also have restrained their behaviour. Alternatively, Mark Goldie has shown the importance in the 1690s of a "de facto" language, which asked for loyalty to William as a return for his protection.<sup>21</sup> It is possible that this, or a variety of other ideas, may have been behind parliamentarians' attitude.

Isolating the influence of courtly reformation amongst this tangle of possible factors is virtually impossible. For a start, there is the intractable methodological problem of making windows into dead men's souls. Historians can never gain direct access to the mental world of past actors, and so cannot give a certain account of people's motivation. The biggest problem is that most human action, and most speech, does not reveal the assumptions and values which shaped it.

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(London, 1968), pp.226-301.

The King's only major defeats, occasions when Parliament rejected policies he personally championed, were the passage of the triennial bill in (1694), the loss of a large standing army (1697-9), and the revoking of grants of lands in Ireland made to courtiers (1699).

<sup>20</sup> For the adoption of this point of view by men after the Revolution see J.G.A.Pocock, The ancient constitution and the feudal law: a study of English historical thought in the seventeenth century, reissue with retrospect (Cambridge, 1987), pp.229-232.

<sup>21</sup> Goldie, "Revolution ... and structure of political argument".

Usually, ideological influences upon behaviour operate at such a deep level that they are generally taken for granted when the action is made. Motivations may, in fact, be so ingrained that actors could not make them explicit even if they were asked. As J.G.A.Pocock has put it,

It is part of normal experience to find our thought conditioned by assumptions and paradigms so deep-seated that we did not know they were there until something brought them to the surface.<sup>22</sup>

Given this, it is extremely unusual for historians to find clear evidence of the mental causes of the behaviour in which they are interested. Often, the best they can do is to sift large quantities of ideologically "low grade" material, in the hope that patterns will emerge which might give clues as to the thinking behind outward action.

Occasionally, of course, scholars are offered apparently direct access to belief. Historical figures do sometimes lay out the principles which lie behind their arguments or action. The problem here is that explicit revelation of ideology usually occurs as part of a polemic. Those who engage in soul bearing are often writers or politicians, who set out their mental stalls in order to gain authority. They refer to ideals and images, less because they hold them, than because they support the argument they wish to make. In these cases, the persuasive purpose of mental revelation opens the possibility of misrepresentation. Actors may describe beliefs which have not actually moved them, because they believe one particular presentation of their case will be most appealing to those they wish to convince. Caution, therefore, must be exercised before using explicit discussion of ideology to gauge the influence of a particular set of ideas.<sup>23</sup>

In the case of parliamentarians in the 1690s, and their absorption of courtly reformation, these basic methodological problems are compounded by a disappointingly thin historical record. Despite living

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<sup>22</sup> J.G.A.Pocock, Politics, language and time, p.32.

<sup>23</sup> The whole area of the connection between a speaker or writer's "intention" in his action, and the "performance" he makes is racked with theoretical controversy. For some discussion of these problems, see H.T.Dickinson, "Political ideas and political reality in eighteenth-century Britain", in Michael Sutton ed., Newcastle Polytechnic, history of ideas colloquium, occasional papers, 1 (1986), pp.5-21; Quentin Skinner, "Some problems in the analysis of political thought and action", Political Theory, 2 (1974), pp.93-128; and the works cited in Introduction, footnote 29.

in a period of intense ideological exchange, William's legislators have left only patchy evidence of their fundamental attitudes.<sup>24</sup> The greatest frustration for the historian is the slim account which survives of parliamentary proceedings. Debates at Westminster might have provided good clues to legislators' beliefs, if only scholars had a better account of what was actually said. In the 1690s there was no official record of parliamentary speeches; the press was barred from reporting deliberations; and few members of either House made detailed notes of their colleague's oratory.<sup>25</sup> Whilst the parliamentary diaries of Anchitell Grey, Narcissus Luttrell and Sir Richard Cocks, give some insight into debates in the Commons, they suffer from considerable weaknesses as material for analysis.<sup>26</sup> Not only do they exclude the peers' discussions, and fail to cover a four year period in the middle of the decade; they consist only of short summaries of speeches which note only the main points made by each MP, along with any oratorical flourishes which caught the diarist's imagination.<sup>27</sup> Such reports reveal a speaker's stance on the topic under discussion, but are usually too abridged and untheoretical to allow sustained investigation of the assumptions underlying his position.<sup>28</sup> Records including such entries as

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<sup>24</sup> Colin Brooks, describing the frustrations of working in this field has written,

We will never know why MPs voted as they did in the 1690s; we can only occasionally catch them having voted, like Bede's sparrow passing through the hall from darkness to darkness. "The country persuasion and political responsibility in England in the 1690s", Parliaments, Estates and Representations, 4 (1984), p.139.

<sup>25</sup> For press restrictions see, M.A.Thomson, A constitutional history of England, volume 4, 1642-1801 (London, 1938), p.333.

<sup>26</sup> Grey and Luttrell's diaries have subsequently been published, see Grey, Debates; Horwitz, Parliamentary diary ... Luttrell. Cock's diaries are held in the Bodleian Library Eng. hist. Ms. B 209-10.

<sup>27</sup> Grey's debates end in 1694, Cocks did not enter the Commons until 1698.

<sup>28</sup> H.T.Dickinson has commented on the absence of theorising in parliamentary speeches for the whole eighteenth century, see Dickinson, "Political ideas and political reality", p.10.



"Sir John Knight rumbled nothing to the purpose", are hardly a firm foundation for ideological analysis.<sup>29</sup>

Outside Parliament, better evidence has survived. Peers and MPs were members of the political and social elite: the sort of folk who generate archives. Often, therefore, there is useful evidence of their activities away from Westminster. Some parliamentarians have left caches of private papers, and the History of Parliament trust, currently compiling its volume on the members of the House of Commons in the 1690s, has amassed a large body of such material. Consequently something is known about many legislators' social networks, their local influence and behaviour, their membership of political and religious movements, their economic situation and so on.<sup>30</sup> Also, evidence can be drawn from the vigorous press debates of the 1690s. Some legislators participated in these, publishing full versions of their speeches in Parliament, writing their own tracts or pamphlets, or commissioning writers to produce material to advance their political campaigns.<sup>31</sup> However, despite the richness of a few of these sources, much of the material remains too patchy for a proper evaluation of courtly reformation's influence. It is neither extensive nor even enough for any firm conclusions to be drawn about legislative reactions to executive propaganda. A good deal of the material is ideologically "low grade". It is the sort of evidence which reveals single instances of outward action, but can only give clues to mentality when there is enough of it to establish consistent patterns of thought. More explicit evidence is

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<sup>29</sup> Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, col.838 - transcript of Grey's record of a debate on the place bill, 1st February, 1693/4.

<sup>30</sup> The first fruits of such research are emerging in such articles as David Hayton, "Moral reform", which was able to correlate MPs interests in different political areas by comparing the evidence from their History of Parliament files.

<sup>31</sup> The classic example here is Robert Harley who both wrote his own material for publication and kept a stable of writers to publicise political points he wished to make. See R.A.Downie, Robert Harley and the press: propaganda and public opinion in the age of Swift and Defoe (Cambridge, 1979). Examples of publication of MPs speeches include Sir Charles Sedley, The speech of Sir Charles Sidley in the House of Commons (London, 1691); John Knight, The speech of Sir John Knight of Bristol, against the bill for a general naturalisation, [London, 1694].

sufficiently rare, that it raises the problem of typicality. Printed polemics by peers or MPs, for example, contain sustained political argument, and so may be very good sources for the thought of those who produced them. Yet since these self-publicists were a small minority of all legislators, historians must be left wondering how representative they were of their silent fellows. Although it could be argued that some of those who organised publications were political leaders, who reflected and influenced the views of a more numerous group of their supporters, political alignments in the 1690s were too fluid for anyone to be sure exactly whom a spokesman represented.

Even without these specific difficulties of evidence, it is likely that the influence of courtly reformation amongst William's legislators would be particularly hard to demonstrate. This is a result of the structure of reformation language. As has been shown, the case Burnet developed for his master had been fashioned from a number of existing conventions. Williamite propaganda was a complex interweaving of old assumptions about the nature and function of Protestantism, which only made a unique, Orange rhetoric when combined in a certain way and applied to particular events in recent history. By themselves, the constituent parts of the language - notions such as providence, anti-popery, and the godly magistrate - were traditional commonplaces.<sup>32</sup> This rhetorical structure raises a difficult question of historical interpretation. Legislators can often be caught using one "reformation" assumption, but are less frequently seen endorsing the whole Burnetine doctrine. They might rehearse one element of the propaganda - for instance, speaking of the King as a Christian magistrate, or attacking the vices of popery - but did not openly espouse the rest. Since these individual assumptions were established conventions, such performances by Lords or MPs cannot automatically be used to demonstrate that the speaker had accepted the courtly reformation position. Each part of the rhetoric had an existence independent of Williamite propaganda, and was still available for use outside that doctrine. Some elements of the royal rhetoric were, in fact, taken up in the 1690s by men not primarily

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<sup>32</sup> For the roots of the rhetoric in traditional discourses see above chapter 2, section 1.

concerned to back Burnet's case. The call for action against vice, for example, was not specific to court rhetoric, but could form part of Whig, Tory or even Jacobite languages when applied in different ways.<sup>33</sup> The historian, therefore has to be careful. It is possible to be fooled into seeing acceptance of Williamite discourse, when all one has is the repetition of very flexible and widely shared units of discourse.

Given all these difficulties, proving the effectiveness of courtly reformation in winning support for William is a well-nigh hopeless task. The best that can be done is to mention what few signs of its influence have survived, and perhaps deploy circumstantial and partial evidence of its acceptance. In accounts of the uses of courtly reformation which follow, the most convincing argument for the rhetoric's importance must remain the effort put into it by William's propagandists. Politicians and intellectual leaders as experienced as the bishops, ministers, and the two monarchs themselves, believed it was worth constructing their case around the principles Burnet had introduced at the invasion.

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<sup>33</sup> At the end of the 1690s Tory and Whig parties charged each other with doing too little to stem the flood of vice. Whilst the Tories built up a popular image of the Junto Whig ministers as sponsors of immorality, Whig writers such as Daniel Defoe attacked their enemies for setting back the campaign for reformation of manners. For an exchange along these lines from the end of the reign see [Daniel Defoe], "The legion memorial", in Walter Scott ed., A collection of scarce and valuable tracts, on the most interesting and entertaining subjects, 13 vols, (London, 1809-1815), vol.11, pp.255-9, especially 258; England's enemies exposed and its true friends and patriots defended, (London, 1701), A justification of the proceedings of the ... House of Commons in the last sessions of Parliament, (London, 1701).

James used moral reform in the summer of 1688, when he issued a proclamation against vice to improve his image at a difficult political time. See James II, By the King ... proclamation ... 29th June 1688.



## Chapter Four

Courtly Reformation, the War and the English Nation

## I

William III was always extremely vulnerable to anti-Dutch xenophobia in England. Throughout the 1690s, his national origins, his policies, and his personal behaviour, all laid him open to accusations that he was a foreign monarch, with foreign interests at heart. The very Revolution, which had brought William to power, had been an affront to English sensibilities. Recent studies by Jonathan Israel have shown that the expedition of 1688 was, at base, a Dutch invasion. The adventure was launched in the interests of the United Provinces; Hollanders had provided most of William's navy and army; and those few English soldiers who had defected to the Orange camp were held at arms length.<sup>1</sup> As the new King took power, his continental priorities, and his reliance on Dutch resources, became still more apparent. During his first weeks in London, William ordered the English navy to attack the French fleet and urged the Convention to come to the Low Countries' military aid.<sup>2</sup> Even before he was crowned, he sent regiments of English soldiers to Flanders to defend the Provinces' borders.<sup>3</sup> Throughout the reign, royal determination to defeat the French at almost any cost involved England in the sort of prolonged continental entanglement which she had managed to avoid for a century. William's reliance on foreign troops to keep order in the home counties; and his closet intimacy with his Dutch friend Bentinck (whom he made a Privy Councillor and Earl of Portland), also suggested a distance from

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<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Israel and Geoffrey Parker, "Of providence and Protestant winds: The Spanish Armada of 1588 and the Dutch armada of 1688", in Israel, Anglo-Dutch Moment, pp.335-64; Israel, "Dutch role". Reresby commented on the London streets being filled with "ill looking and ill habited Dutch and other strangers of the Princes army" in January 1688/9. Browning, Memoirs ... Reresby, p.545.

<sup>2</sup> Jones, Revolution of 1688, p.310; Journals ... House of Lords, vol.14, pp.101-2.

<sup>3</sup> John Childs, The British army of William III, 1689-1702, (Manchester, 1987), pp.19-20.

Englishmen and their concerns.<sup>4</sup> All this evidence of foreign bias at court could easily have become a fuse for the powder keg of English chauvinism.

Critics of William's regime were not slow to take advantage of their opportunity. The Jacobites, in particular, played the xenophobic card for all it was worth. From the earliest hint of William's regal ambitions, they exploited the English horror of Holland. The very first pamphlet of James' 1688 propaganda campaign, the Dutch design anatomized, stoked fears of universal monarchy. It warned the English of Holland's takeover of their country, and told them that if William succeeded, they would become subservient to foreign masters within weeks. Dutchmen, the pamphleteer claimed, would stalk the court, the streets and the Royal Exchange.<sup>5</sup> Other early Jacobite pamphlets outlined a Dutch plan to undermine all the key features of English national life. They charged the Hollanders with attempting to snuff out English commerce; impose excises and other foreign taxes on the people; export their tyrannical version of republicanism; and spread their ungodly Presbyterian religion.<sup>6</sup>

These first Jacobite publications were hurtful enough, but as time wore on, James' supporters put even more effort into stirring up English xenophobia against William. There were two reasons for this. First, the Jacobites' constitutional arguments, on which their platform had been based in 1688, became much less cogent once William was in power. The fear of anarchy which they had invoked during the invasion, and their emphasis on effective authority as a bulwark against chaos,

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<sup>4</sup> Williams friendship with Portland is discussed in Baxter, William III, pp.274, 348-52. His preference for Dutchmen was notorious. For accusations that he refused to dine with Englishmen in his first months in England, see Macpherson, Original papers, vol.1, p.288.

<sup>5</sup> Dutch design anatomized, p.20.

<sup>6</sup> Some reflection upon ... Declaration, pp.4,13; Prince of Orange his Declaration ... modest remarks, p.17; Min Heer T.Van C.'s answer to Min Heer H. van L.'s letter of the 15th March, 1689; representing the true interests of Holland and what they have already gained by our losses, [1689]; England's crisis: or the world well mended, (London, 1689); The ballance adjusted: or the interest of Church and state weighed and considered upon this Revolution, [1689?].

worked against their cause after the new regime's peaceful accession.<sup>7</sup> In these circumstances, James' supporters found it useful to fall back on English chauvinism - a polemical weapon whose edge had not been blunted.<sup>8</sup> Second, Jacobites came to concentrate upon anti-Dutch rhetoric because the increasingly apparent cost of William's continental war played into their hands. The new monarch's boundless enthusiasm for the defeat of Louis allowed his opponents to claim that England was being exploited in a battle not her own. The Dutch, the Jacobites could argue, were using William to bleed England dry. They were appropriating English troops and coin to obtain security at little cost to themselves. Estimates of the damage done by William's war appeared even before any bills came in. One author, writing very soon after the Prince of Orange's seizure of power, listed the results of the Revolution: "reproach, violence, taxes, blood and poverty". Under "taxes" he estimated the cost of war at three million pounds per annum. This included the expense of seventy ships to patrol the Channel, 15,000 troops for Flanders, and as many to defend the English shore. Under "blood" and "poverty" he outlined the loss of life and economic disruption of the coming conflict, concluding,

Whether we regard our selves, Scotland, Ireland, or  
Holland; war and Blood look us in the Face, and Poverty and  
Misery must follow: These are like to be the sad  
Consequences of this Celebrated Change.<sup>9</sup>

After England had officially opened hostilities against France, the unfair, draining and disruptive cost of the conflict became the main theme of Jacobite literature. It was addressed by numerous clandestine pamphlets; in James' messages to his old subjects; and even by a Dryden

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<sup>7</sup> J.C.Findon, "The non-jurors and the Church of England, 1689-1716", (Oxford, DPhil, 1979), pp.131-148, outlines the difficulties Jacobites had defeating the argument that any rising for James would cause needless disruption.

<sup>8</sup> Legal and constitutional rectitude, however, remained an important theme of Jacobite polemic in the 1690s - see Findon, "Non-jurors", pp.141-2; Howard Erskine-Hill "Literature and the Jacobite cause: was there a rhetoric of Jacobitism?" in Cruickshanks, Ideology and conspiracy, pp.49-69, especially p.51.

<sup>9</sup> A remonstrance and protestation of all the good Protestants of this kingdom, against deposing their lawful sovereign, King James II, (London, 1689).



prologue spoken (once - before it was banned) from the stage.<sup>10</sup> The very titles of Jacobite works betray their content: The dear bargain; The sad estate of the kingdom, The price of the abdication (that is, James' supposed abdication); Great Britain's just complaint for her late measures, present sufferings.<sup>11</sup> All accused the Dutch of seizing control of English affairs and raiding English resources for their own ends.

All this polemic was extremely worrying for William's regime. At a basic level, it risked conversions to James' cause. The government was so nervous about one anti-war pamphlet, the Remarks on the present confederacy (1693), that it executed its Jacobite printer, William Anderton.<sup>12</sup> Worse still, xenophobia began to cross over to men supposedly loyal to William. As the strains of war grew, anxiety about Dutch power was expressed in Parliament. In the 1690s the Commons rang to angry warnings of foreign influence. There was bitterness over the Dutchmen amongst the King's advisers; over the drain of cash out of the country; over the pensions and land grants given to foreigners; and over the fact that Englishmen were commanded by Hollanders in the armies in Flanders.<sup>13</sup> To give just a flavour, Sir Thomas Clarges spoke

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<sup>10</sup> Dryden's prologue for The prophetess, which likened the expense of opera to the expense of war, and complained of the current economic recession caused by the conflict, was banned after its first performance in May 1690, Swedenberg, Works ... Dryden, vol.3, pp.255-6, 507n.

<sup>11</sup> [Nathanial Johnston], The dear bargain; or, a true representation of the state of the English nation under the Dutch, [1689?]; The sad estate of the kingdom, [1690]; The price of the abdication, [1693]; [James Montgomery], Great Britain's just complaint for her late measures, present sufferings and the future miseries she is exposed to, (London, 1692). See also, in the same vein, The people of England's grievances inquired into, [1693?]; A letter to a member of the committee of grievances, containing some seasonable reflections on the present administration of affairs, since managed by Dutch councils, [1690].

<sup>12</sup> Remarks on the present confederacy and late Revolution in England, (London, 1693). Anderton was arrested and tried on the 1st June 1693, and executed on the 15th. The Jacobites were able to make political capital out of this, accusing the whole Williamite judiciary of corruption and tyranny, see A true copy of the paper delivered to the sheriffs of London and Middlesex by William Anderton, at the place of execution, [London, 1693].

<sup>13</sup> See for example, Horwitz, Parliamentary diary ... Luttrell, p.267 - Sir Joseph Williamson's 1692 complaint that the Dutch were not pulling their weight in the war; p.243 - Mordaunt's objection to foreign military commanders; Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5,

repeatedly in the winter of 1692/3 (a parliamentary session marked by particular sourness towards the Dutch) to warn that England was suffering a vast drain of cash to the Low Countries.<sup>14</sup> In a famous interjection on the 9th December, he openly accused Portland of fostering the conditions which allowed this haemorrhage to occur.

I cannot but take notice that though we were drawn into this war by the Dutch - they being the principals - yet we must bear a greater share of the burden. These things, I am afraid, are occasioned by having one of the Dutch [E]states in your council.<sup>15</sup>

Such bitterness continued throughout the war, and shaped politics even after the conflict had finished. In 1701 William found that he had to make concessions to the House of Commons when trying to determine who would gain the English throne after he and his sister-in-law, Anne, had died. In order to secure the succession of the House of Hanover, which he favoured, the King had to reassure the English that they would never again be victims of policies advancing alien interests.<sup>16</sup> Clauses of the Act of Settlement stated that any future foreigner who came to the throne could only appoint Englishmen as Privy Councillors, and could neither leave the country, nor use English troops to defend foreign possessions, without parliamentary approval.<sup>17</sup> This legislation stood as an implied rebuke to William's lack of English patriotism over the previous ten years.

However, despite the vigour of the Jacobite press, and the signs of real disaffection with William's bias towards Holland, English xenophobia ultimately had only a limited impact on politics in the

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col.777 - Sir John Thompson's 1693 complaint about pensions given to foreigners; col.794 - Sir Christopher Musgrave's complaint about Dutch counsels. For the constant objections to lands being granted to William's Dutch favourites, see J.C.Simms, The Williamite confiscations in Ireland, 1690-1703, (London, 1956). For an MP's objection to hoards of foreigners settling in Britain under William, see Knight, Speech ... against the bill.

<sup>14</sup> Horwitz, Parliamentary diary ... Luttrell, pp.250, 288.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. p.304.

<sup>16</sup> Ogg, England ... James II and William III, p.467.

<sup>17</sup> The Act, (12 and 13 William 3 c 2) is printed in Browning, English historical documents, pp.129-135. Relevant passages p.134.

1690s. Most importantly, the anti-war sentiment sometimes apparent in Parliament proved a fairly minor irritant to the court. As Robert McJimsey has shown, few MPs or peers advanced any real alternative to the European policy William was pursuing; and most parliamentarians restricted their criticism of continental warfare to efficiency or tactics.<sup>18</sup> Legislators rarely threw fundamental doubt on England's participation in the conflict. The Commons readily made money available for William's adventures, and there were many instances of parliamentary enthusiasm for continental escapades.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, attacks upon Hollanders often ran alongside considerable sympathy for their plight. In many quarters, the English and Dutch were recognised as sharing a genuine community of interest. For example, on the 5th December, 1693, Sir Charles Sedley rose in the Commons to berate those who repined at William's request for a large army. Sedley was an MP who frequently spoke and voted with Sir Thomas Clarges against the Treasury bench, yet he could not condone any move which might place the Dutch in danger. The army, he claimed,

is not so dangerous as is said. It is to defend us from France and Popery. If Holland be destroyed, it is our turn next.<sup>20</sup>

There were several good reasons why the anti-Dutch xenophobia stirred up by the Jacobites did not become triumphant. Most obviously, the United Provinces were the nation's chief ally against the French. In the later seventeenth century, France was increasingly seen as

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<sup>18</sup> Robert D. McJimsey, "A country divided? English politics and the Nine Years War", Albion, 23 (1991), pp.61-74.

To take one example of limited criticism, Christopher Musgrave's attacks upon the estimates for the army in December 1691 were designed, not to reduce England's fighting strength abroad, but to render it more efficient by reducing overhead costs. See Horwitz, Parliamentary diary ... Luttrell, p.80.

<sup>19</sup> At the start of the 1690 spring session of Parliament, 1.2 million pounds was quickly voted in extraordinary supply for the war. In 1692, the government got only 5% less money than it had asked for in a session which had opened with a Commons resolution to supply enough for a "vigorous" war against France. On the 28th November, 1691, the ministry evaded a threat to the army estimates by leaking a project for a massive descent upon France. See Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, pp.53-4, 106, 72; Horwitz, Parliamentary diary ... Luttrell, pp.46-9.

<sup>20</sup> Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, col.795.



England's main strategic and trading rival. A belief that one's enemy's enemy was one's friend, served to limit hatred of the old antagonist. In addition, Louis XIV's support for the discredited James drove many Englishmen into Dutch arms.<sup>21</sup> However, any explanation of English acceptance of a foreign ruler, and of support for defence of the Netherlands, must include some space for courtly reformation. As part of its case for a renewal of English righteousness, Burnet's rhetoric provided a neat response to anti-Dutch prejudice. Reformation polemic answered the xenophobic case by advancing a conception of Englishness very different from that held by the King's critics. It eased William's position by providing an open account of who the English were and a flexible definition of what exactly "England" was.

## II

In order to follow the Williamites' strategy, it is necessary to understand the sense of English nationality which the King's propagandists had to combat. The Jacobites, and other critics of William's continental bias, took an economic, almost "mercantilist" view of England. As they questioned royal policy, they presented their country as a set of material resources which had to be husbanded for her born citizens. In tracts and speeches which attacked the Dutch, "England" was portrayed as a stock of men, money, and land, which was in danger of depletion by the activities of strangers. Underpinning this xenophobic vision, was an image of the realm as a glorified gentry household. Colin Brooks has pointed out that many MPs who complained about the costs of William's government in the 1690s, conceptualized England by employing an analogy with their own country estates.<sup>22</sup> They saw their nation as a sort of ancient family, with its own fortune; and worried that current extravagance would prevent this inheritance being passed on to the next generation. Such familial imagery was

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<sup>21</sup> Certainly, French support for the Jacobites helped get England back to war in 1701. Louis XIV's recognition of James' son as King of England sparked off a wave of addresses in favour of vigorous action, and cut the ground from those attempting to preserve peace. See Luttrell, Brief relation, vol.5, p.94; Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, pp.296-301.

<sup>22</sup> Brooks, "Country persuasion", p.140.

particularly strong amongst Jacobites. They saw James as the father of his people, and presented William and Mary as ungrateful and rebellious children ruining the clan's wealth by their ambitious selfishness.<sup>23</sup>

This vision of nationality was dangerous to the new regime because of it was so exclusive. It first defined the nation as a body of kinsmen, and so denied that a foreign-born monarch could be part of it: and then concentrated on the preservation of national resources, thus casting William, with his tax demands, as a plunderer of England's estate.

The courtly reformers countered this dangerous conception of the nation by advancing a different account of Englishness. Whilst their alternative view was not a direct contradiction of the "household" vision, it did have a sharply different focus, which centred around the moral and spiritual condition of the people, rather than national stock. For William's propagandists, the essence of "England" - the thing which defined who Englishmen were and which held them together - was not a set of inherited resources, but a national covenant with the deity. To answer the broadly economic fears of their xenophobic countrymen, Burnet and his circle advanced a "Hebraic" view of their nation which described it as a body united by its peculiar relationship with God.

The courtly reformers' sense of nationality sprang from their attempts to bring out the full significance of 1688. Endeavouring to present the Revolution as part of a process of reformation, the court's spokesmen were drawn to discuss previous occasions on which the deity had intervened to restore his true faith amongst the English. The Williamites found that their interpretation of 1688 was strengthened if it was placed in the context of earlier deliverances. For example, in 1695 William Wake drew on a standard catalogue of divine mercies when preaching against suggestions that Mary's death demonstrated God's anger with England's change of regime. He defended his King by reminding his audience that the deity had repeatedly preserved the English and their religion when things seemed most hopeless. He cited the death of Mary Tudor, the miscarriages of conspiracies against

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<sup>23</sup> For this rhetoric, see Monod, Jacobitism, pp.55-6.

Elizabeth, and the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot; and then drew William into this protection by adding 1688 to the list.<sup>24</sup>

This use of history fed into a peculiar view of nationality because the reformers offered an explanation for the pattern of divine concern they outlined. They accounted for repeated mercies by suggesting that God had entered into a covenant with the English people. They argued that the deity had offered the nation a binding contract, under which he would protect the people, in return of their espousal of his cause.<sup>25</sup> This notion of a national covenant owed much to an old habit of drawing an analogy between England and Old Testament Israel. Since Tudor times, English Protestants had sensed that they were specially favoured by God, and had understood their position by analyzing the covenants Jehovah had offered the Jews at Beer-sheba, and Sinai.<sup>26</sup> The English had pawed over scriptural history, believing that contemporary lessons could be drawn from God's treatment of his first covenanted people.<sup>27</sup> The courtly reformers continued this tradition, and made it a characteristic feature of their Williamite propaganda. Trying

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<sup>24</sup> William Wake, Of our obligation, p.25.

<sup>25</sup> This idea was an extension of a long heritage of covenant theology, which had considered God's promise of mercy and salvation to individuals, and its conditions.

For some of history and complexities of covenant theology, see Jens G. Møller, "The beginnings of puritan covenant theology", Journal of Ecclesiastical History, 14 (1963) pp.46-67; Richard L. Greaves, "The origins and development of English covenant thought", The Historian, 31 (1968), pp.21-35;

For some theorising about the political and sociological implications of covenant theology when applied to groups of people, especially nations, see Michael McGifford, "God's controversy with Jacobean England", American Historical Review, 88, (1983), pp.1151-1174; David Zaret, The heavenly contract: ideology and organization in pre-revolutionary puritanism, (London, 1985); Michael Walzer, Revolution of the saints: a study in the origin of radical politics, (London, 1966).

<sup>26</sup> For these covenants see, Genesis, 22 and Exodus, 24-31.

<sup>27</sup> The best summary of this tendency in Tudor and early Stuart thought is Patrick Collinson, The birthpangs of Protestant England: religious and cultural change in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, (London, 1988), chapter one.

The Hebraic analogy was not peculiar to England. for explorations of its use in other Protestant nations see Simon Schama, Embarrassment of riches, passim, but especially chapter 2; Perry Miller The New England mind: the seventeenth century, (Cambridge, 1939).



to account for the mercy of 1688, they maintained that the English had been taken into the "protection and favour" once enjoyed by the Jews.<sup>28</sup> Consequently, the propagandists constantly compared the state of England and Judah, and even referred to their nation as "our Sion", or "our Israel". In the bishops' rhetoric London was Jerusalem, whilst William retained his role as David.<sup>29</sup> Burnet made explicit the connection between old and new chosen people when preaching to the House of Lords in 1689. Discussing the Revolution, he claimed, "we have had as many of the distinguishing characters of the Jewish nation upon us ... as any nation under heaven."<sup>30</sup>

He has given us a plain and simple Religion; he has delivered us from all Bondage, both in Spiritual and Temporal Concerns; and he has sent us mighty Deliverers; Aarons in the Church, and Moses and Miriams in the State, an Elizabeth and a MARY, as well as an Edward, a Charles and a WILLIAM.<sup>31</sup>

John Sharp was as adamant when addressing the King and Queen two years later. Using mystical language, he argued for a literal translation of election from Israel to England, now that the Jews had rejected Christ.

For, it is the Isles of the Gentiles, by which Name the Scripture expresseth those Countries that were at the greatest distance from the Continent of Judea; I say, it is these Isles, which now at this day (God's ancient People the Jews being for their Infidelity long ago rejected) are

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<sup>28</sup> The quote is from Gilbert Burnet, A sermon preached at Bow Church before the Court of Aldermen on March 12th 1689/90, being the fast day, (London, 1690), p.10.

<sup>29</sup> William Wake was especially fond of presenting William as David. See Wake, Sermon ... House of Commons ... 5th June, 1689, p.27; William Wake, A sermon preach'd before the Lord-Mayor ... on Thursday the 26th November, being the day of the publick thanksgiving, (London, 1691); William Wake, A sermon preached in the parish church of St. James Westminster, April xvith, 1696, being the day of thanksgiving, (London, 1696). See also, Thomas Tenison, A sermon concerning holy resolution preached before the king at Kensington December 30th, 1694, (London, 1695).

<sup>30</sup> Burnet, Sermon ... House of Peers ... 5th of November 1689, p.3-4.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. p.7.

the principal seat of his Church and Kingdom, and to which he vouchsafeth the Light of his Gospel.<sup>32</sup>

At their most impassioned, Williamite reformers could apotheosize England as

A nation of [God's] peculiar love and protection; the Vineyard which his own right hand hath planted, and watered, and fenced, and preserved both Night and Day, his Jedidah, his Hephthiziba, and Beula, the Signet on his right hand, and the labour of his endearing love.<sup>33</sup>

At first sight this "Hebraic" view of England might appear no less exclusive than the alternative "household" vision. There may seem nothing in it which could solve the problem of William's foreignness. Hebraism, after all, contained a strong sense of national identity; a feeling of specialness; and a belief in English separation from the rest of mankind. However, studied more closely, the courtly reformer's sense of nationality can be seen to have been more open. English Hebraism contained two ambiguities which allowed its adherents to shift and redefine the boundaries of Englishness. In the hands of Burnet and his allies these ambiguities could be exploited to Anglicise a foreign King, and even to suggest that William's wars, damaging as they appeared to the nation's material interests, were in fact England's highest national duty.

### III

The first ambiguity in the Williamites' Hebraism was its curious lack of confidence. Although royal rhetoric presented the English as a chosen nation, it also reminded the people that their salvation, either temporal or eternal, was not secure. The analogy between England and Israel could provide comfort in times of adversity, but it also made it clear that the national covenant with God did not ensure continuing protection. The Old Testament was not an idyllic story of unbroken divine favour. Rather, it was a chronicle of judgements upon a backsliding people. The Jews had suffered plagues, defeats and famines

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<sup>32</sup> John Sharp, A sermon preach'd before the King and Queen at Whitehall, the 12th Nov 1693, being the day appointed for a publick thanksgiving, (London, 1693) pp.22-3.

<sup>33</sup> Proposals for a national reformation of manners, humbly offered to the consideration of our magistrates and clergy, (London, 1694), p.3

as punishment for their incorrigible sins, and had eventually been scattered when Jehovah lost patience with his children.<sup>34</sup> Jewish history thus proved that God's grace towards a people would always be conditional. Chosen nations had continually to earn their blessings by obedience to divine law.

This sense of insecure election fed an uneasy uncertainty into Williamite propaganda. Burnet and his circle argued that, whilst England's position as a new Israel was a privilege, this very status meant that she was subject to the same judgement which had hung over the Jews. The English were on trial, the bishops warned, and, like their predecessors, would be destroyed if they did not improve their moral and spiritual condition. In the very Lords sermon in which Burnet had drawn out the similarities between the English and the Hebrews, he compared the two nations in their sins as well as their blessings. For him, the "distinguishing characters" that marked England as a new Israel included ingratitude to God. The bishop chillingly observed that the "parallel" between the two cases agreed "too exactly", and reminded his audience that God's favour to the Jews had lasted no longer than their observation of their covenant.<sup>35</sup> John Tillotson similarly warned his countrymen of the consequences of their chosen status. He told them that just as the English resembled the Jews "in their many and wonderful deliverances", they also mirrored them "too much in their faults and follies".<sup>36</sup> For Edward Fowler too, the analogy between England and Israel was a cause for consternation rather than rejoicing. Addressing the London Corporation on a fast day he exclaimed,

O let us not of this City, and this Kingdom, be acting the Israelites still over and over, those fearfully hardened People who had even made a Covenant with death. ... [If the English did this] we are more desperate than they were,

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<sup>34</sup> The key text was Hosea 1:9 in which God repented of his protection of his first chosen people, because of their sins - "Then said God, 'Call his name Lo-ammi: for ye are not my people, an I will not be your God'".

<sup>35</sup> Burnet, Sermon ... House of Peers ... 5th November 1689, pp.3, 6, 12.

<sup>36</sup> John Tillotson, A sermon preach'd at St. Mary le Bow before the Lord Mayor ... of London on Wed 18th June, a day appointed by Their Majesties for a solemn monthly fast, (London, 1690), p.25.



because we are fore-warned of the dismal consequence of such doings, by their fearful Example.<sup>37</sup>

In fact, Hebraism often transformed Williamite propaganda into a haunted language of apprehension. The sermons which promoted the King's cause were frequently jeremiads, which echoed the lamentations of Old Testament prophets. The bishops even took surprisingly little comfort from 1688. At the Revolution, they asserted, God had proved that he still cared about the English nation. Yet the people's behaviour since that deliverance had threatened to reverse their special blessing. In particular, fast sermons and the propaganda of the societies for reformation of manners used Hebrew scriptures to express horror at the state of England. To take just two examples, Edward Fowler and Simon Patrick berated their fellow subjects in fast sermons in 1690 and 1692. The former preacher wanted to know "What reformation hath our late deliverance wrought amongst us", whilst the latter asked "are we not lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God?".<sup>38</sup>

This ambiguous English Hebraism, which encapsulated both a sense of national election, and a brooding fear of failure, proved very useful to the courtly reformers. They found they could deploy it to develop a more inclusive account of Englishness. The language provided them with three strategies by which they might admit the foreign-born William to a version of English nationality, and counter the damaging impression that he still had Dutch interests to heart.

First, Hebraism discouraged a direct connection between the hardships England was suffering and the King's policy of protecting Holland with English arms. Within the Hebraic worldview, national misfortunes were to be analyzed, not simply in temporal terms, but as trials or judgements, episodes in the divine drama of God's dealings with his people. The bishops' favourite explanation for the costs of war was, therefore, that they were just deserts for the people's failings. This distracted attention from the King's part in bringing

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<sup>37</sup> Fowler, Sermon ... Bow-Church April the Xvith 1690, p.21.

<sup>38</sup> Fowler, Sermon ... Bow-church April the Xvith 1690, pp.27; Patrick, A sermon preach'd before the Queen at Whitehall, the 8th April, 1692, being the day appointed to implore God's blessings on their Majesties persons, (London, 1692), p.12

hardship on England, and neatly transferred blame to the English themselves. In a speech delivered to the clergy of his Salisbury diocese, Burnet urged that when flocks complained of England's fortunes, they should be told to reflect on their own part in bringing disasters about.

If some years are less prosperous than others have been, we ought to reflect on former Successes, and the ill use that we have made of them, which may have provoked God to change his methods ... Can one reflect on the Blasphemy and Infidelity, the dissolution of all good Morals, and the Impieties and Vices of all sorts that are among us, and not wonder rather, that we have not been made a scene of Earthquakes and Ruins, as Sicily, Malta and Jamaica have of late been. It is to these sins that we ought to turn the minds of our people, when they are at any time dejected with ill success.<sup>39</sup>

Royal proclamations re-enforced this message, stressing that an end to national sufferings, particularly through victory in the war, depended on individual Englishmen propitiating God, as much as on royal policy.<sup>40</sup>

Second, the bishops' Hebraism allowed a new account of national loyalty which could turn William into an English patriot. This account began from the simple assumption that sin could be equated with treason. The unrepentant were disloyal to their nation because they risked the withdrawal of God's protection, and all the dangers which would follow from that. Burnet spelled this out towards the end of William's reign, telling sinners they were no less treacherous than the Jacobite conspirators who invited in French force. Now that many of the

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<sup>39</sup> Gilbert Burnet, Four Discourses delivered to the clergy of the diocese of Sarum, (London, 1694), preface, p.18-19.

<sup>40</sup> William III and Mary II, By the King and Queen, a proclamation ... 23 May 1689, stressed the dangers William and the nation faced in the war and asked for humiliation and amendment that God would "vouchsafe a special blessing to this their righteous undertaking". Thanksgiving proclamations such as William III and Mary II, By the King and Queen, a proclamation ... 22 October 1691, emphasised the role of fasting and repentance in bringing about military success.

Lord North's government was to use calls for national humiliation in a very similar way during the War of American Independence, see Paul Langford, "The English clergy and the American Revolution", in Eckhart Hellmuth ed., The transformation of political culture: England and Germany in the late eighteenth century, (London, 1990), pp.275-308, especially pp.293-4.

English walked in luxury, and now that atheism and impiety stalked the land,

Storms may shatter our Fleets, and if God should for our  
Sins deliver us so far to an the Enemy that they should but  
once Land upon us, How naked and defenceless are we?<sup>41</sup>

The obvious reverse of this view of treason, was an account of patriotism, which defined it as zeal for reformation. Since those who followed God's law secured blessings on England, they were truly loyal. Preaching to the Prince of Orange on the 20th February 1688/9, Simon Patrick stated that anyone who "loves his country" would have to "do his part" in bringing the nation back to its primitive purity.<sup>42</sup> All "estates and conditions of men", Patrick assured the Prince's retinue,

are obliged to discharge their several Duties  
conscientiously; that they may contribute to the peace and  
quietness, Prosperity and Happiness of the Society whereof  
they are members.<sup>43</sup>

Tillotson echoed this a year later. He told the House of Commons that the only way for men "to engage the providence of God for us" was to do all they could, in their "several places from the highest to the lowest ... to retrieve the ancient piety and virtue of the nation."<sup>44</sup> The clear implication of this rhetoric was that William could be an English patriot. Since the King's campaign of reformation would bring down God's blessings, it proved his concern for his new realm. The presentation of the monarch as a purging ruler became, simultaneously, an assertion of his love of England.

Third, English Hebraism allowed William to become the very embodiment of his new nation. The case here was built on two principles (discoverable from close reading of the Old Testament) by which God decided when a nation was ripe for punishment. First, the bishops

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<sup>41</sup> Burnet, Charitable reproof, p.26.

<sup>42</sup> Simon Patrick, A sermon preached in the chappel of St James' before His Highness, the Prince of Orange, the 20th January 1688, (London, 1689), p.34

<sup>43</sup> Ibid. p.35.

<sup>44</sup> John Tillotson, A sermon preached before the Honourable House of Commons on Wednesday 16 April. A day appointed by Their Majesties for a solemn monthly fast, (London, 1690), p.32-3. See, in a similar vein, Sharp, Sermon ... House of Commons ... Wed 21 May 1690, pp.36-7.



pointed out that the righteous often brought disproportionate relief for a sinful nation. Though usually a minority, they could act as intercessors for their people to God; convincing him that an otherwise debauched and incorrigible nation was still worth protecting. Effectively, they became national attorneys, men whose virtue could represent that of the general population. The bishops proved this from the Hebraic analogy, making much use of passages such as Genesis 18:32, where the Lord promised not to destroy Sodom if he could find ten righteous men there. In 1690, Edward Fowler applied the principle to contemporary England, warning of impending judgements on English sinfulness, but speculating that God's punishment might be delayed. Fowler could not tell

how merciful he may be to us, for the sake of His Great Name; or what Respect he may yet farther have to the Intercessions of those many good People in the Land, who sigh and mourn for the Abominations of it.<sup>45</sup>

He went on to suggest that if a way could be found for those good men to discipline the "blacker crimes" of their neighbours, "we know not what blessings such a partial reformation may prove for us."<sup>46</sup> Preaching in the same year, William Lloyd agreed. Having stated that those who would not reform could not be good subjects, he urged his audience at court to strive for purity of life.<sup>47</sup>

Oh! if we could all attain to this! if any number of us could do it! I will not say the whole Nation, but if a considerable part of it! What Favours might we not hope, the whole Nation would have for their sakes?<sup>48</sup>

To this principle, the bishops added the observation that God paid particular attention to political authorities when reviewing the moral state of the nation. They pointed out that the magistrate's obligation to suppress godlessness was more onerous than that of the private man. The biblical text, Romans 13:3-4, which explained temporal power as a

<sup>45</sup> Fowler, Sermon ... Bow Church ... April the Xivth 1690, p.31.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. p.32.

<sup>47</sup> William Lloyd, A sermon preached before the King and Queen at Whitehall, March the twelfth 1689/90 being the fast day, (London, 1690), p.30-1.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. p.31.

divine grant made with the intention that governors suppress evil, became a reformation favourite.<sup>49</sup> Holding this view of authority, Williamites saw any magisterial failure to impose reform as a particularly heinous example of treachery.<sup>50</sup> The Williamites insisted God saw a nation as worthy of punishment, less when sin became widespread, than at the moment when the magistrates ceased to check it. It was, Simon Patrick claimed, "This bold commission of sin without correction" [my emphasis], which God would "account the sin of the kingdom". "It will lie especially at the door of the magistrates and offices of justice, if they can, and yet will not redress such impieties."<sup>51</sup> Edward Stillingfleet underlined this with the essential biblical analogy.<sup>52</sup> He told the story of the punishment of Israel in Eli's time when the Ark of the Covenant was lost to the Philistines.<sup>53</sup> Stillingfleet showed the greatest fault for this tragedy lay with the magistrate Eli, because he did not restrain his two sons who had set the people a sinful example.

It was not for Eli's Personal Miscarriages, that God thought himself so dishonoured by him, but for want of taking due Care for the suppressing Profaness and Corruptions or [sic] Manners in others.<sup>54</sup>

Since Stillingfleet pointed out that the loss of the tabernacle was a national punishment, (the Ark was the symbol of Israel's deliverance from bondage and idolatry) it is clear that the bishop saw the

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<sup>49</sup> The text reads "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have the praise of the same. For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil".

<sup>50</sup> For the figure of the negligent magistrate in the writings connected with the reformation societies, see above pp.55-6.

<sup>51</sup> Patrick, Sermon ... Whitehall ... 8th April 1692, p.19.

<sup>52</sup> Edward Stillingfleet, Reformation of manners, the true way of honouring God. With the necessity of putting the laws in execution against vice and profaness. In a sermon preach'd at Whitehall, (London, [1709?]) - this sermon was probably first delivered on the 29th November, 1691.

<sup>53</sup> 1 Samuel 2-4.

<sup>54</sup> Stillingfleet, Reformation of manners, p.12.

magistrate as standing for the nation in God's eyes. Eli was punished in his private capacity by the loss of his sons in battle with the Philistines. The nation as a whole, however, had to bear a punishment occasioned by Eli's failings as a ruler. It was magisterial negligence which effectively nationalised sin, and provoked God to vengeance on the whole people.

Bringing these two principles together, the courtly reformers used them to suggest that William, in a sense, could become England. Since God was prepared to accept the righteousness of the few as the justification of the many; and since he paid particular attention to magistrates; William could become the supreme intercessor for, and representative of, his people. Edward Fowler, when he wondered why God had not visited such an incorrigible nation as his own, found part of the solution in William's person and the programme of courtly reformation. Fowler told his audience they could not tell if the divine hand had been stayed by

these Monthly Days of Humiliation [the public fast days] (which Their Majesties, like Religious and Pious Princes, have obliged us to the Observance of) as they are a Publick Owning of Him, and Solemn Acknowledgements of his absolute Sovereignty over us, and of our ill-deserving at his hands, in the Face of the World: ... Or whether God may still be merciful to us and prosper our Forces by Land and Sea, for the sake of that Glorious Work, he is now in all likelihood a doing in the World, (wherein we trust he will make our Sovereign a Blessed Instrument) we know not.<sup>55</sup>

In such rhetoric William was more than a patriot for his new nation: he had become the very embodiment of it. His actions had stood for England's actions, and the nation had received blessings for his sole sake. The courtly reformers' Hebraic view of England, concentrating upon the national covenant with God, had produced an almost complete identification between King and realm.

#### IV

Aside from its inherent anxiety about punishment and failure, the Williamites' Hebraism contained a second ambiguity, which could Anglicise the King's war with France, as well as his person. Despite

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<sup>55</sup> Fowler, Sermon ... Bow Church April the Xvith 1690, p.31-2.



providing the English with a strong sense of their special status, the language of reformation denied that they had been set aside from the rest of mankind. The chosen people were presented as the particular recipients of God's favour, but, paradoxically, were also shown to be only one small part of a godly international.

The tension between the national and the universal had always been present in English Hebraism. The ambiguity had initially emerged as writers tried to identify the new Israel within the framework of Calvinist thought which dominated Tudor Protestantism. "Israel" was, by definition, the collective name for God's people. Calvinism, however, made it impossible to identify this people with any earthly nation. The theory of predestination by inscrutable divine will made it most unlikely that any national body of men and women would coincide with God's true Church. Even if a nation appeared outwardly righteous, Calvinists insisted it was likely to contain many reprobate hypocrites, who were damned because they had not received the gift of grace.<sup>56</sup> They thus had difficulty conceiving of an unproblematic godly nation, and showed an increasing tendency to limit their definition of Israel. By the early Stuart period, the term was widely used to refer, not to England as a whole, but to the hidden remnant within it.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, Calvinist soteriology made it unlikely that the Holy Spirit would confine its attentions to a single nation. Tudor Protestants saw the true Church as a universal body, scattered throughout Europe in many kingdoms, existing wherever isolated individuals received God's grace. Despite William Haller's contention that Foxe's Acts and monuments established England as the elect nation, the author of the Book of Martyrs was not himself convinced that God's people were contained

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<sup>56</sup> For discussion of the problems Calvinism caused the idea of an elect nation see, Michael McGiffert, "God's controversy with Jacobean England"; Jane Facey, "John Foxe and the defence of the English Church" and Catherine Davies, "'Poor persecuted little flock' or 'commonwealth of Christians': Edwardian Protestant concepts of the true Church", both in Peter Lake and Maria Dowling, Protestantism and the national Church in sixteenth century England, (London, 1987), pp.162-192; 78-102.

<sup>57</sup> See Collinson, Birthpangs, pp.20-27

within political boundaries.<sup>58</sup> He viewed the survival of the godly as a European drama and made the Frenchman Waldo, the Czech Hus, and the German Luther, heroes of his story. Patrick Collinson has summarised this universalism by writing of the Tudor "sense that the Church achieved its truest identity above nationality ... as a mystical entity". He charted the resulting confusions in English Hebraism, which could use "Israel" to mean the universal community of the godly; the temporal English nation; the righteous remnant in England; or an ambiguous combination of these.<sup>59</sup>

Burnet and his circle cleared up some of this difficulty for themselves by abandoning rigid Calvinism. Like most of their contemporaries, though not the King, they had moved towards a "holy living" soteriology before 1688, which insisted that the divine gift of grace was, to some degree, conditional upon repentance and efforts to a righteous life.<sup>60</sup> This shifted responsibility for salvation from God's irresistible gift, towards the efforts of the sinner, and incidently allowed a less troublesome identification of England with Israel. Under the new theology, it was always possible that the whole English population might be persuaded to repent, and so become a true people of God by all gaining election.

However, despite clarifying the conception of a godly nation, Burnet and his circle were no less ambiguous than their Tudor

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<sup>58</sup> William Haller, Foxe's "Book of Martyrs" and the elect nation, (London, 1963).

<sup>59</sup> Collinson, Birthpangs, chapter 1. See also Firth, Apocalyptic tradition, pp.106-109; Bauckman, Tudor apocalypse, p.86; David Loades, "The origins of English Protestant nationalism"; and A.J.Fletcher "The first century of English Protestantism and the growth of national identity", both in Stuart Mews ed., Religion and national identity, Studies in Church history 18 (Oxford, 1982), pp.297-308 and 309-319.

<sup>60</sup> The standard work on this theological shift is C.F.Allison, The rise of moralism, (London, 1966). For the future courtly reformers' role in promoting holy living theology, see John Spurr, "'Latitudinarianism" and the Restoration Church", Historical Journal, 31 (1988), pp.61-82; Christopher Hill, A turbulent, seditious and factious people: John Bunyan and his Church, 1628-1688, (Oxford, 1989), pp.130-5. The courtly reformers' position is perhaps best summarised in a passage from Richard Kidder, The duty of the rich: in a sermon ... Easter Tuesday April 22, 1690, (London, 1690), p.25 - "We disclaim the merit, but must believe the necessity of good works, in order to obtaining eternal Life".

predecessors about England's peculiar status within Christendom. Their new theology forbade any exalted claims for English uniqueness as effectively as Calvinism had done. Since the bishops had less room for God's inscrutable gifts of grace; and since they argued that simple repentance was the qualification for election, they were unable to claim any special favour bestowed upon Englishmen. In the propagandists theology, their countrymen might become Israel by living in righteousness: but this was an option available to all other peoples. There was nothing peculiar or mysterious about the way the English might gain God's favour - it was laid out in the bible for all mankind.<sup>61</sup> The bishops did admit that, in the sixteenth century, God had given the English special providential help to further their reformation. However, they were also heirs to the Tudor tradition of studying European history as a whole, and accordingly admitted that the Lord had been active elsewhere at the birth of Protestantism. Although some of the beliefs and structures of the English ecclesia were unique, the Williamites never used these features to deny that foreign Protestants were part of God's true Church.<sup>62</sup> Burnet prefaced one of his most impassioned comparisons between England and Israel with a warning that his audience must listen "without any arrogant preferring our own

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<sup>61</sup> John Sharp made this clear when insisting that Christ had preached "his gospel to all nations", whilst Patrick described the conditions of the national covenant as simple adherence to God's biblically stated will. John Sharp, Sermon ... House of Commons ... Wed 21 May 1690, p.7. Simon Patrick, A sermon preach'd before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in the Abby-church at Westminster, on the 5th November, 1696, (London, 1696) - pp.29-30. These two sermons further undermined the idea of uniquely-chosen peoples, by analyzing the position of the Old Testament Israel. Both insisted that God had only "chosen" the Jews in the sense that he had explicitly revealed to them the principles on which he dealt with all nations. Patrick, Sermon ... Westminster ... 5th November, 1696, pp.19-20; Sharp, Sermon ... House of Commons ... Wed 21 May 1690, p.15.

<sup>62</sup> Indeed some of them would spend a great deal of effort fostering contacts with foreign Protestant Churches, and attempting re-union with them. See Sykes, From Sheldon to Secker, pp.136-9. This outlines a network of correspondence across Protestant Europe, which included Wake, Sharp, Tillotson and Burnet.



nation to others, or any partiality for our selves, in imagining that we are God's favourite people".<sup>63</sup>

All this left Williamite rhetoric in some confusion. Consideration of England's past deliverances suggested she was special. Yet, since the covenant which explained these deliverances was identical to covenants God might reach with other nations, full analysis of them undermined England's uniqueness. This ambiguity ran through the whole courtly reformation campaign. Burnet, for instance, celebrated England's avoidance of European disasters. But he denied that God had given his kingdom any special security against them. Short of repentance, there was no way to be sure what had happened abroad would not happen here. In an unpublished sermon on William's first fast day he told members of the court that the persecution faced by Protestants in France, Hungary, Piedmont, and Transylvania, and the military danger faced by those in Holland and Ireland, contained a message of direct relevance to their own country.<sup>64</sup> In his Discourse of the pastoral care (1692), he told his readers to "look at the instruments of the calamities that have fallen so heavily on so many Protestant Churches."<sup>65</sup> Simon Patrick, writing to the clergy in Ely in the year Burnet's book was published, told them

you ought to warn your People of the heavy Judgements of God, which the sins of the Land give us just cause to apprehend; and that the rather, since God has spared us so long, whilst he has visited so many Nations round about us in so terrible a manner.<sup>66</sup>

Thus Hebraic language, which at first sight seemed to set the English apart, actually re-absorbed them into a universal Church. On

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<sup>63</sup> Burnet, Sermon ... House of peers ... the 5th November 1689, p.3.

<sup>64</sup> Burnet, Some sermons, p.39. This sermon was originally preached on 5th June, 1690, at Hampton Court, before William and Mary. It was not published at the time because although it was well received by the King "some opposed the order it to be printed, as containing some bold strokes that ought not to be encouraged by a court". Ibid. preface p.xxii.

<sup>65</sup> Gilbert Burnet, A discourse of the pastoral care, (London, 1692), preface, p.x.

<sup>66</sup> Simon Patrick, A letter of the bishop of Chichester to his clergy, (London, 1690), p.2.

the 26th November 1689, Burnet preached at St Lawrence Jewry. His address was essentially an appeal to national unity based on the text Acts 7:26, which included the phrase "Ye are brethren".<sup>67</sup> Burnet gave two accounts of what these words implied for his audience. The first was straightforward enough, and contained a strong sense of nationality. The congregation in the City that day were brethren because they were Englishmen. They were united by the same laws, lived under the same ruler and inhabited the same island.<sup>68</sup> The second account was, however, much less clear. Burnet used the Jewish analogy and the idea of a covenant to unite his auditors in brotherhood. At precisely this moment, Hebraic language began to disrupt the preacher's national sense. "In this 'Ye are Brethren'", Burnet stated,

there is a closer relation implied; That as the Jews were all Brethren with regard to that Covenant to which they had a Right, as they were Abraham's Seed; so we Christians are Brethren, as we profess the same common Christianity, and look for the same common Salvation. As we are Christians, or as we are Protestants we are Brethren, believing the same Gospel, owning the same God.<sup>69</sup>

In this passage the Jewish covenant became the type, not of a peculiar English relationship with God (there was no such thing), but of a covenant offered to all Protestants. This implied a brotherhood of all those of the reformed faith, and so allowed a vision of the Church universal to break through the Englishness outlined in the early minutes of Burnet's speech. From this point on it was not clear whether the preacher was taking a national, or a supranational view of his situation, since he slid unconsciously between his two visions. He spoke of English national history, but also of events in the Savoy, Germany, and France as if they were part of the same story.<sup>70</sup> In a passage towards the end, the preacher told his audience they stood at the beginning of a deliverance from bondage, and could be "made one of

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<sup>67</sup> Gilbert Burnet, An exhortation to peace and union in a sermon preached at St Lawrence-Jury on Tuesday the 26th November 1689, (London, 1689).

<sup>68</sup> Ibid. p.6-10.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid. p.10.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid. pp.12, 16.

the most glorious nations that ever was."<sup>71</sup> Yet it is not clear whether the nation referred to was England, or whether it was a sort of spiritual nation, uniting all European Protestants. The evidence for deliverance consisted of the close union of the British "kingdoms" [my emphasis] with the United Provinces, and the fact that the "great persecutor of Protestants" [Louis XIV] had raised a strong alliance of princes against himself.<sup>72</sup> Burnet also stated that the deliverance could not be complete until the Irish had been rescued from popery. All this implied that William's work for England was just one small part of the process.<sup>73</sup> The blessings that God was promising were intended for the English, but not solely for the English.

Eight months later, universalism emerged even more clearly from Burnet's Hebraism. Giving a fast sermon to court in July 1690 the preacher performed his usual trick of relating Jewish history to draw contemporary lessons. Yet the lessons this time were not for England. They were for the whole of reformed Christianity. The Israelite backslidings and punishments were types of a series of international crises which European Protestantism had had to face as one body. These included such periods as the 1550s, (when Catholic rulers in both England and France had started to roll back the reformation in their realms); the 1580s, (when both the Dutch and the English had faced the power of Spain); and the 1620s, (when Protestantism everywhere was put at risk by the disastrous early years of the Thirty Years war).<sup>74</sup> Burnet was careful to present the latest crisis, the one resolved by William's intervention in England, as similarly European. It had started in 1685, the date not only of James' popish accession in England, but of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and of Louis XIV's pressure on the Protestants on the Rhine.<sup>75</sup> Burnet's reading of God's new Israel

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid. p.19.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid. p.18.

<sup>74</sup> Gilbert Burnet, A sermon preached before the Queen at Whitehall on the 16th day of July, 1690 being the monthly Fast, (London, 1690), pp.24-7.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid. p.28.



transcended national divisions to unite all reformed religions in common peril, suffering and resistance.

In so far as the confusion between the English and the universal was resolved in Burnet's rhetoric, it was so by subordinating local patriotism to supranationalism. The bishops found in the bible a way to reconcile national and universal impulses which their own scriptural studies had produced. Using the Isaiahan formula that God had never intended to confine his grace to Israel, but had wanted that country to be "a light to the gentiles"; the bishops could assure England that she could be a special nation, but only by zeal in the international Protestant cause.<sup>76</sup> Like Israel's, England's true destiny came not through setting herself aside from other nations, but by being the blessed core of God's world community. Burnet asked England to be a beacon "with a benign influence on all the foreign Churches".<sup>77</sup> She was to be the "pattern and glory" of the Reformation, and had a chance to become "more and more, that which she truly is, the praise of all the Churches, and the joy of the whole earth."<sup>78</sup> William Lloyd shared these hopes. He talked of the Lord's "meaning to set us up like a light on a hill, that we should be a pattern to all other nations".<sup>79</sup>

The ambiguity between the national and the universal in Williamite rhetoric has been discussed as if it were an illogical flaw in their argument. In fact it was one of the language's great strengths as propaganda. By confusing the grounds for England's separateness, and incorporating the country within a Protestant international, the bishops could address criticism of William's continental wars. They could try to sell the King's battles to protect Protestants abroad as vital to England's true national interests. If the country's destiny could be presented bound up with the whole European Reformation,

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<sup>76</sup> Isaiah 49:6

<sup>77</sup> Burnet, Essay ... late Queen, (London, 1695), p.147.

<sup>78</sup> Burnet, Sermon ... Whitehall ... 19th October 1690, p.35; Burnet, Exhortation to peace and union, p.24.

<sup>79</sup> Lloyd, Sermon ... May 29 ... King and royal family, p.24. See also Sharp's presentation of the Church of England as a pillar of the international protestant cause. John Sharp, To the reverend clergy of the diocese of York, (London, 1699), p.1.

William's military exploits could be interpreted as a defence of an international Church, of which England was the heart and core.

# V

Williamite use of a universal cause to justify their leader's military action was first evident during the invasion of England. Jonathan Israel has suggested that in 1688, the Orange camp tried to avoid discussion of the European situation. He has pointed out that William's Declaration did not analyze events outside England, and has claimed that this omission was part of a deliberate strategy to minimise Dutch involvement in the expedition.<sup>80</sup> This may have been true of the manifesto itself, but it did not hold for the rest of Orange propaganda. Other productions were willing to risk resentment at Dutch interference, and boldly placed William's adventure in a European context. The invasion was described as part of an international Protestant crusade, in which Holland and England must be partners. For example, the biographies of the Prince which appeared in 1688 sold him as an appropriate ruler of England by advertising his record as a Protestant commander abroad.<sup>81</sup> His resistance to the French in the Netherlands was presented as his best qualification for the crown. Another pamphlet lengthened the focus to show that the Orange family had engaged in a generations-long, and Europe-wide, struggle against the false Church.<sup>82</sup> In a similar vein, the speech William gave to his troops as they embarked emphasised that he was the commander of God's international forces. He boasted that his army was composed of men of many countries, and warned that England and the United Provinces, the Protestant pillars of Europe, must stand together if they were to

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<sup>80</sup> Israel, "Dutch role", pp.122-4.

<sup>81</sup> Character [of William]; Character of His Royal Highness.

<sup>82</sup> The history of the most illustrious William, Prince of Orange: deduced from the first founders of the ancient House of Nassau, together with the most considerable actions of this present Prince, (London, 1688).

defeat "the cankered hearts of our irreconcilable enemies."<sup>83</sup> Later, Gilbert Burnet at St James' treated William's enterprise as a salvation for Protestants everywhere. The man who had once saved Holland now offered

a check to the spirit of Persecution, which [had] of late raged so furiously against our Brethren in so many different places of Europe.<sup>84</sup>

Once William was crowned, and had taken the English into alliance with the Dutch, this supranational rhetoric of crusade was maintained. In fact, it was remarkable how loyal the King's propagandists were to it. It dominated the regime's justification of war, even in theatres where less "universal" languages were available. In Ireland, for instance, the ideal of a pan-European Church was upheld, despite the close links between London and Dublin, which might have suggested a more parochially "British" approach.

The situation in Ireland before 1691 was very threatening to the English regime. As soon as William had come to power in Westminster, forces loyal to James had risen against Orange rule, and had been joined by French troops and the old King himself. Although the Protestant population was loyal to the London government, and held on to enclaves in Ulster, the Jacobites rapidly overcame resistance and controlled most of the country by the autumn of 1689. Expeditions were sent to help the Williamite Irish, but progress was disappointing, and Orange armies were tied up fighting the revolt for two years.<sup>85</sup> To support this military effort, it might have been possible for government propagandists to develop a feeling of "Britishness".<sup>86</sup> They could have encouraged a sense of community between the peoples of the British Isles, and then appealed to the English to help fellow Britons

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<sup>83</sup> William III, The Prince of Orange his speech in defence of the Protestant religion, (London, 1688).

<sup>84</sup> Burnet, Sermon ... St James' ... 23rd December 1688, p.4.

<sup>85</sup> See, David Hayton, "The Williamite Revolution in Ireland, 1689-91", in Israel, Anglo-Dutch moment, pp.185-214.

<sup>86</sup> The use of the term "British" to cover both Great Britain and Ireland is offensive. No workable alternative, however, suggests itself.



as they faced a foreign invasion. To some extent, the King's spokesmen attempted this. They claimed that Ireland was legally part of England, and argued that whoever was crowned in Westminster Abbey was automatically ruler in Dublin.<sup>87</sup> Yet this was about the limit of a British dimension in Williamite propaganda. Rather than develop a patriotism which would include the inhabitants of both islands, Burnet and his allies handled the Irish war by changing straight up from an English, to a universalist rhetoric. Their language never spoke of "Britain", but instead recognised only a chosen nation (England) on the one hand, and the pan-European cause on the other.

The language surrounding William's personal expedition to Ireland in 1690 proves the point. On 14th June, the King landed at Belfast to lead his forces against the rebellion. Soon after disembarking he went to divine service and heard a "most eloquent sermon" by George Royse, a chaplain travelling in the royal party who had been recommended for his post by John Tillotson.<sup>88</sup> Royse's task was to provide pious encouragement for the military campaign ahead. He did so by reminding the army of the eternal battle between the two Europe-wide Churches.

How much the general interest of the Reformed Church and Religion does depend upon the present Juncture and success of things, I need not tell you; and since God has interposed his word for the Maintenance of his True Religion in the World, we may reasonably build our confidence on this, and face our Enemies with a true heart and courage.<sup>89</sup>

Royse demonstrated that William was not a national, or a British ruler only, but a universal instrument of God's providence, who acted in many different realms to secure the true religion. He had come from saving

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<sup>87</sup> The Declaration of Right had assumed this constitutional connection, offering William and Mary the crown of "England, France, Ireland and the Dominions thereunto belonging", Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, col.110-111. The status of Ireland with relation to England at this time is discussed in Patrick Kelly, "Ireland and the Glorious Revolution: from kingdom to colony", in Beddard, Revolutions of 1688, pp.163-212; and Hayton, "Williamite Revolution in Ireland".

<sup>88</sup> Historical Manuscripts Commission, Report of the manuscripts of the late Allan George Finch, 4 vols (London, 1922), vol.2, p.298 - Sir Robert Southwell to the Earl of Nottingham, 15th June 1690.

<sup>89</sup> George Royse, A sermon preached before the King at Belfast on 14th day of June 1690, (London, 1691), p.20.

Holland's reformation, to save England's, and had now come to promote God's cause in Ireland. William was

A Prince, who as he was miraculously brought amongst us to begin our deliverance, so he seems to be acted now by a new Commission from Heaven to complete it.<sup>90</sup>

William's own speech on his landing in Belfast echoed these universal themes. He presented his life as one of service to his deity which had taken him right across Europe in defence of Protestantism.<sup>91</sup> William's thanking the Duke of Schomberg for his command in Ireland may also have served to remind his audience of the international Protestantism of his forces. Schomberg was a half-English, half-German Protestant, who had been in Dutch service since fleeing France with the Huguenots on the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.<sup>92</sup> Williamite propaganda for the rest of the 1690 campaign stuck to these themes. For example, the newsletters, which kept Londoners informed of events over the water, did not develop a sense of British community. In them, William's allies abroad were described as "Protestants", whilst his enemies were labelled "the Irish". An Englishman's friends in the West were thus linked to him by a universal term, whilst the national name of another "British" people was used to tag foes.<sup>93</sup> This message was rammed home in sermons by Irish clerics, printed ballads, and plays published in

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid. p.21.

<sup>91</sup> A full account of King William's royal voyage and safe arrival at the Castle of Belfast in Ireland, (London, 1690).

<sup>92</sup> Schomberg himself could be presented as a supranational leader of the Protestant cause, see His Grace the Duke of Schomberg's character ... together with some old prophecies, foretelling the conquest of that kingdom by the Protestant army under His Grace's command, (London, [1689]).

<sup>93</sup> See, for example. A true and perfect journal of the affairs in Ireland since His Majesties arrival in the kingdom, (London, 1690). This provided a retrospective day by day account, written by "a person of quality", of life in the Protestant community in Dublin. It concentrates on the fears of massacre by the Irish, and the hopes placed on William and his Protestant forces. For pamphlets in a similar vein see A true and faithful account of the present condition of the kingdom of Ireland, (London, 1690); A full account of the two great victories lately obtained before Limerick by K.William's forces over the French and Irish rebels, (London, 1690); Great news from Limerick giving an account of the successful victory over the Irish rebels, (London, 1690)

London as the Irish battles unfolded. All of these stressed religious, rather than "British", links between William's army and its local supporters.<sup>94</sup> Gilbert Burnet capped the campaign with a thanksgiving sermon for the King's success. William, he said, had been born with very few advantages, but now had the hopes of all the continent fixed upon him. It was from this monarch that "Europe expects liberty and peace, and the Reformation a recovery and a new lustre."<sup>95</sup>

The international language of godly crusade also dominated discussion of the Flemish war. At first sight, it appears obvious why this should be so. An appeal to Protestant solidarity should have been appropriate to sell the defence of the reformed Dutch against papist French invaders. Unfortunately, the propagandists' task with regard to the Low Countries was not as simple as this. William's conflict in Flanders was not an unambiguous clash of faiths. In the Low Countries, the King was fighting to protect a reformed nation, but this religious end was not his prime objective. His chief desire was to restrain French ambitions, and in order to achieve this, he had made pacts with Catholic states. In the period before 1689, William had persuaded Spain and the Empire into his camp, and had even cashed in on the Pope's francophobia.<sup>96</sup>

In this inconvenient situation, it might have been possible for Williamites to abandon reformation rhetoric, and stress the importance of restraining Louis on secular grounds. They might have talked about

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<sup>94</sup> See Edward Weterhall (the bishop of Cork), A sermon preached at Whitehall, before the Queen, on the fourth Sunday in Lent, March 22, 1690 reflecting on the late sufferings and deliverances of the Protestants in the City and County of Cork, (Cork, 1691). This stressed the debt the Irish Protestants owed to William - see especially p.34. Amongst numerous ballads stressing the united cause of Protestants see The soldiers return, or his promise to his country-men perform'd, [1690]; The valiant souldiers misfortune: or His Grace the Duke of Schomberg's last farewell, [1690]; The courageous souldiers of the West, [1690]. The plays stressed the difference between the Protestant and Catholic character revealed in the Irish warfare. The royal flight, or the conquest of Ireland, (London, 1690); The royal voyage, or the Irish expedition, (London, 1690). The plays are discussed in Lois Potter, "Politics and popular culture: the theatrical response to the Revolution", in Schwoerer, The Revolution of 1688/9, pp.184-197.

<sup>95</sup> Burnet, Sermon ... White-hall ... 19th day of October, 1690, pp.16, 17, 26.

<sup>96</sup> Carswell, Descent on England, p.126.



the strategic and commercial dangers of allowing France to dominate Europe, and explicitly endorsed a "balance of power" doctrine.<sup>97</sup> Yet, like the "British" language for Ireland, this option was rejected. William's camp did sometimes mention the "geo-political" or economic threat posed by Louis XIV, and occasionally drew attention to the wide spectrum of powers (including Catholic powers) opposed to him. Nevertheless, the emotional heart of their appeal remained the doctrine of reformation. In his 1692 speech to Parliament, William admitted he was in league "with most of the princes and states of Europe" but went on to stress his defence of God's cause, and requested support from all who had "any zeal for our religion".<sup>98</sup>

The courtly reformers preserved their rhetoric in the face of William's alliances by subtly re-orientating their attack upon popery. In the war propaganda of the 1690s, censure of popish behaviour fell, not upon the Catholic Church in general, but upon a much narrower entity - the French court. Arguing that the main threat to God's cause in contemporary Europe was Louis XIV's government, rather than the entire Roman system, the propagandists concentrated upon the clash between their godly ruler and the French prince of darkness, and so passed over the Catholicism of Spanish and Austrian allies. This re-direction was signalled as early as Burnet's St James' sermon in 1688. In this address, the preacher had been careful to point out that many Catholics were deluded rather than evil, and asked that such men be left in peace.<sup>99</sup> This rhetoric tried to calm the waves of anti-Catholic violence which marked William's invasion, and may have been part of a coherent attempt to reassure William's allies that he was no Protestant zealot.<sup>100</sup> It also, however, refined the equation between the Roman

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<sup>97</sup> King William did talk in these terms in his last speech to Parliament, a few months into his second English war against France - see Journals ... House of Lords, vol.17, p.6.

<sup>98</sup> Journals ... House of Lords, vol. 15, p.102-3.

<sup>99</sup> Gilbert Burnet, Sermon ... St. James' ... 23rd December, 1688, pp.28-30.

<sup>100</sup> For the anti-Catholic violence see Robert Beddard, Kingdom without a King, pp.41-45. For William's tolerationist tendencies see Jonathan Israel, "William III and toleration".

faith, and the evil forces which had opposed God's cause through history. In Burnet's sermon, "popery" was no longer the Roman religion per se, but was confined to those parts of it, currently embodied in Louis's regime, which posed the most pressing threat to righteousness.

The shift was continued by dressing the French King as Antichrist.<sup>101</sup> If Versailles, rather than Rome, could be identified as Babylon, then the iniquities of non-French Catholics would fade in comparison, and alliance with such men would appear less strange. In accordance with this strategy, the courtly reformers put much stress on Louis' persecution of reformed Christians. After Foxe's "Book of Martyrs" Englishmen would always view such cruelty as the classic mark of the Beast. Consequently, the declaration of war against the French in April 1689 cited the harassment of Protestants as one of the causae belli, and Burnet's circle homed in on horrors of Louis rule.<sup>102</sup> Simon Patrick, for example, preaching at a fast in 1690, thanked God that the Revolution in England had stopped

the Whipps, and Gibbets, and Racks, and Fires, and other Instruments of Cruelty, wherewith we have seen it [popery], torturing the Bodies and Souls of innumerable good Men and Women in France, and in other places.<sup>103</sup>

In the same year Burnet warned the English that they should not be deluded into thinking their French enemies were "not quite so bad as our fears may have pictured them to us." Their record in treating those they conquered suggested they were even worse.<sup>104</sup> Similarly, an anonymous defence of Tenison's funeral sermon for Mary in 1695, accused

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<sup>101</sup> In making this shift, the reformers were following the rhetoric of persecuted Huguenots of France. Burnet was in contact with Pierre Jurieu, a leading Huguenot author, who interpreted the struggle between William and Louis as apocalyptic events. See Pierre Jurieu, The accomplishment of scripture propheties, or the approaching deliverance of the Church, (London, 1687); Pierre Jurieu, Monsieur Jurieu's judgement on the question of defending our religion by arms, with reflections upon the affairs of England, (London, 1689) - a translated pastoral letter to the Huguenots, dated 1st January, 1689, .

<sup>102</sup> William III and Mary II, Their Majesties declaration against the French King, (London, 1689) - the declaration is dated 7th May 1689.

<sup>103</sup> Simon Patrick, A sermon preached before the King and Queen at Whitehall April 16, 1690, being the fast day, (London, 1690), p.28.

<sup>104</sup> Burnet, Sermon ... Bow Church ... March 12th 1689/90, p.15.

the archbishop's Jacobite detractors of supporting French power. The French, the author reminded his audience, were those who had persecuted Protestant subjects, and had hung the citizens of Heidelberg by the hair.<sup>105</sup> According to William Lloyd, the issue in contemporary Europe was the very survival of the reformed religion. The French King had hunted the Huguenots out of his country like wild beasts, and lent his guards to the Duke of Savoy to extirpate his reformed subjects.

This he doth for his Glory, as being the most Christian King; and if other Princes will follow him, no Protestant shall live in this World.<sup>106</sup>

With such brutality described, William's propagandists could go on presenting William's foreign wars as a Protestant jihad, notwithstanding co-operation with Spain, the Pope and Austria. They had painted the struggle between their King and Louis in such black-and-white terms, that William's alliances no longer mattered. Tenison opened the war propaganda with his fast sermon to the Commons on the 5th June, 1689. In this, he assured MPs that they were "engaged in the evangelical cause against popish superstition", and stated that English armies would go abroad "in the name of that God who is truly the Lord of Hosts".<sup>107</sup> Subsequently, the Williamites kept up a barrage of pan-European rhetoric which stressed the common cause of all Protestants. The English were endlessly updated on the situation on the continent, and reminded that their status as a chosen nation entailed sacrifice to protect their co-religionists across Europe. Burnet's sermon to the Corporation of London early in 1690, and the supplications published for fast days were particularly good examples. Burnet's address combined the most vivid Hebraic imagery, with an appeal for William's war to be properly manned and funded. The preacher told the Mayor and Aldermen that their City faced the same destruction as Jerusalem when Jesus had wept over it, and warned them that their duties in avoiding

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<sup>105</sup> A defence of the archbishop's sermon on the death of her late Majesty of blessed memory, (London, 1695), pp.8, 13-4.

<sup>106</sup> William Lloyd, A sermon preached before Their Majesties at Whitehall, on the fifth day of November, 1689, (London, 1689), p.28.

<sup>107</sup> Tenison, Sermon against self love, pp.23, 27.



this catastrophe must include both moral reform and full support for William and his war effort.

If we have any Regard either to our Selves, our Families or Posterities, to our Religion or our Country, to the present or the succeeding Generations, we must now unite our whole Strength, and turn our whole Forces against those Enemies of Humane Nature ...

If while things are in this State, every one will look on, and fancy, That this lies on the Government, and not on himself; if Men will neither with their Persons, nor their Purses contribute what is in them to our preservation ... this gives us yet a more terrible Prospect than the Jews had.<sup>108</sup>

The forms of prayers for the war's fast days included a new collect "for all the reformed Churches", which was designed to remind Englishmen of the fate of their continental brethren. It lamented the sad state of the continental reformation and went on to appeal to God - "who hast united us into the mystical body of Christ (that is his Church)" - to have mercy upon the Englishman's fellows abroad.<sup>109</sup>

It is difficult to state exactly why so much investment was put into courtly reformation's vision of a universal Church, and why other rhetorics which might have helped to sell the war were downgraded. There is no explicit evidence of choices between languages being made in Williamite circles. However, it is possible to offer some suggestions. There were, for instance, good reasons why a "British" rhetoric might have been rejected when discussing campaigns in Ireland. Recent work by John Morill has suggested that Englishmen in the 1640s and 1650s were unwilling to see the islands on which they lived as a political or spiritual entity.<sup>110</sup> If this attitude persisted after the Revolution, then propaganda based upon a "British" patriotism would have been ineffective, since its audience would have been unused to thinking in these terms.<sup>111</sup> Moreover, it is possible that the use of

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<sup>108</sup> Burnet, Sermon ... Bow Church ... March 12th 1689/90, pp.20-1.

<sup>109</sup> Form of prayer ... Friday the eighth day of April next

<sup>110</sup> John Morill, "The Britannic Revolution, 1640-60", (unpublished seminar paper read at the Cambridge seventeenth-century seminar, autumn term, 1992)

<sup>111</sup> Certainly, the bishops themselves did not often think in "British" terms. The catalogue of divine interventions they used to establish their people as chosen nation was limited to events in English history. In the series of deliverances described, Scotland and

internationalist rhetoric in the Irish arena might have had a strategic purpose. It was obvious from the first that Flanders, not the British Isles, would be the main site of William's military effort against France. In this situation it might have been dangerous to use a British rhetoric to cover the battle in Ireland, since such a language risked placing the Irish and continental conflicts in different categories, and might render the Flemish war less vital to Englishmen. The danger of such a de-coupling was evident as early as June 1689 when parliamentary debates revealed a growing mood of alarm at the lack of progress in Ireland, associated with angry swipes at the Dutch as the cause of England's troubles.<sup>112</sup> A rhetoric which excluded any concept of "Britain" might help to stem this tide by giving all William's conflicts abroad equal importance.

The relative neglect of "balance of power" and commercial rhetorics to sell the continental war is harder to explain. These alternative languages neatly side-stepped the ideological difficulties of a Protestant crusade, and were perfectly familiar to late Stuart audiences. Perhaps the propagandists were reluctant to ditch arguments based on courtly reformation, because they tied in so neatly with the rest of their message. Having staked so much on William's godliness to promote his domestic government and his Irish campaigns, Burnet and his circle might have feared that it would have been damaging to retreat from their image of the King when he was directly facing the shock troops of popery. Perhaps, too, the propagandists genuinely believed the providential purpose of William's war, and wished to convince their countrymen. It is also possible that Burnet's allies thought the English would be most easily roused by a vigorously anti-Catholic rhetoric. As Linda Colley has recently argued, England's sense of nationhood, and her willingness to fight abroad, were based upon the threat of an encircling papist "other", not only in the late Stuart

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Ireland were treated as sources of potential popish threat, rather than as Protestant allies; and Henry VIII, Cranmer, and Elizabeth were the heroes of the story, not Scottish or Irish reformers.

<sup>112</sup> Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, pp.32-3.

period, but on into the eighteenth century.<sup>113</sup> For all the problems associated with William's popish alliances, his spokesmen clearly felt they could gain most capital by continuing to present their master as the reforming champion of God's cause.

## VI

The Williamites had thus used Hebraic language to take their fight deep into their critics' territory. The ambiguities of a conditional chosen people, and a universal nationalism, had created languages with which to confront the suspicion that William was at base a Dutchman. The logic of the "household" view of England had been reversed. Now that the English had been told they were bound in covenant with God - and now that they had been instructed that this covenant included support for godly princes and the European Protestantism - reluctance to help William was transformed from national prudence, to national sin.

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<sup>113</sup> See, Linda Colley, Britons: forging the nation, 1707-1837, (London, 1992); Linda Colley, "Britishness and otherness. An argument", Journal of British Studies, 31 (1992), pp.309-329. Both these are excellent in exploring the religious roots of national feeling; but they perhaps miss the "internationalist" ambiguities of Protestant nationhood. Protestantism, as has been demonstrated, could serve as the solvent, as well as the cement, of national identity.



## Chapter Five

Courtly Reformation and the Politics of Party

## I

One of the most remarkable features of William's invasion of England in 1688, was the degree of support it received from both Whigs and Tories. For a few brief weeks over the winter, old enemies united in defence of the Protestant religion, and in agreement that James could no longer be trusted with the exercise of uncontrolled monarchical power. Whigs such as Wharton and Montagu, who pressed William's case amongst the political elites in London, were joined by Tories such as Sir Edward Seymour, flocking to the Prince's banner in the West.

On coming to power, William tried to capitalise upon this consensus, and unite his new realm behind the war against France. The ministry he first constructed combined men of both parties in an attempt to force them to work together, and bury factional jealousies for good. William balanced a Whig Secretary of State, the Earl of Shrewsbury, with a Tory one, the Earl of Nottingham, and constructed a Treasury Commission from men of differing political backgrounds. Whilst the royal household, judiciary and admiralty were mainly Whig preserves, the Marquis of Halifax, who was no species of Whig, was made Lord Privy Seal, and a leading Tory, the Earl of Danby, was promoted to the Marquisate of Carmarthen, and the Lord Presidency.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, however, inherited bitterness proved too strong for the King's plans. Very quickly, recognisably partisan disputes re-emerged to break the brief and essentially negative consensus against James and began to plague William's relations with Englishmen.

At the risk of vastly over-simplifying a complex parliamentary situation, in which political groupings were fluid, and in which there was rivalry and diversity of opinion within the two camps, three main sources of division between Whigs and Tories can be identified under

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<sup>1</sup> Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, pp.17-9. Horwitz's sometimes maligned book is the essential starting point and guide for any detailed study of 1690s politics.

William.<sup>2</sup> First, naturally, there were arguments over the personnel of government. The battles of the 1680s had bred such mutual mistrust, that few Englishmen could bear the sight of their old enemies in power. William's first ministry therefore failed to gel as the two groups of ministers worked to exclude one another from their posts, and the rest of the reign was to be marked by intense struggles for office, organised on broadly party lines.<sup>3</sup>

The other two issues to divide Englishmen into Whig and Tory camps in the 1690s were extensions of the disputes which had split the country before William arrived. The civil problem of the constitution, and the religious question of dissent, continued to dominate politics - even though the Revolution had transformed the content and context of the arguments. On the civil side, the dispute was obviously no longer whether James should be allowed to inherit royal power. Everyone who welcomed William's intervention in 1688 had accepted that a papist ruler could not be trusted with the actual exercise of authority.<sup>4</sup> However, even though this much had been agreed, debate about the constitution continued. The first point of division was the nature of the Revolution. After 1688, the two parties clashed repeatedly about what had happened in that year, and squabbled over the legal principles which should be applied to its events. Whig interpretations of the Revolution were confused. As J.P.Kenyon has shown, Whigs in the 1690s used a variety of diverse, and even contradictory, explanations of the deposition of

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<sup>2</sup> Henry Horwitz describes a deeply confusing political situation in the 1690s, in which alignments could change, almost hour by hour, according to the subject under discussion, see Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, pp.94-100, 208-218, 316-320.

<sup>3</sup> Feiling, History ... Tory party, still provides one of the clearest accounts of the period.

<sup>4</sup> The case of Bishop Turner of Ely demonstrates how widely this principle was accepted in 1688/9. Turner had been a leading loyalist under James and was later a non-Juror and Jacobite. However in the Convention debates he was willing to accept that the English constitution effectively excluded a papist from actually exercising the administration of government (though not, of course, from royal title). Catholicism, an "irremovable persuasion in a false religion" had, to be treated like infancy, madness, sickness or senility in rulers. Debate at large ... abdicated, p.15.

James.<sup>5</sup> One line of argument, however, was characteristic of their thought. Most Whig polemic insisted that 1688 had been an instance of the English people's right to resist a tyrant. Although Whigs disagreed about the precise circumstances in which resistance might occur; about the theoretical basis of the right; and even about who precisely might resist; they generally concurred that James had been tyrannous, and had been legitimately removed by his subjects.<sup>6</sup> Tories rejected this logic. Although many Whigs were keen to stress that 1688 had been an extraordinary situation, which would not be a precedent for regular cashiering of monarchs, their opponents feared that their principles dissolved royal authority, and would rapidly lead to anarchy. In response, Tories championed interpretations of James' removal which would preserve their old ideal of non-resistance. For instance, in the Convention of 1689 they worked for settlements which denied the people's right to disobedience. Some argued that James himself had taken the decision to abdicate, and that Mary, as his next heir, should inherit the throne.<sup>7</sup> Others pressed for a regency, arguing that whilst monarchs could not be deposed by their people, they could prove themselves incapable of actually exercising authority.<sup>8</sup> Even after these arguments had been defeated and William had been placed on the throne, Tories clung to their non-resistance theories. They either passed into Jacobitism, or, more usually, insisted that whilst James's days were over, they had not been ended by legitimate, popular deposition. He had lost the throne through his own decision to withdraw; because he had been defeated in a just war; or because his land had been conquered by a sovereign prince, who had had no duties as a subject towards him.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Kenyon, Revolution principles, chapter 4.

<sup>6</sup> Mark Goldie, "Revolution ... structure of political argument", defines Whig writers as those who used resistance theories to legitimate 1688.

<sup>7</sup> See Jones, Parliamentary history, p.34.

<sup>8</sup> See Jones, Revolution of 1688, p.313-4. Talk of the regency is recorded in Danby's notes on the debates in the Convention - see British Library Egerton Ms 3345 bundle 3.

<sup>9</sup> For Tory theories of the Revolution, see Goldie, "Tory political thought", pp.61-129.



The second point of contention was William's title. Whilst Whigs held that William was a constitutionally chosen monarch, with a full legal right to his position, Tories were worried that his ascent to the throne broke the hereditary principle. Many of those who accepted the Revolution salved their unease by maintaining that although William was an authoritative monarch, he was so de facto, not de jure. They argued that the Prince of Orange should be obeyed because he was actually in power, but they maintained that he did not have a complete legal title to the throne, since that rested, following heredity, with James.<sup>10</sup> This controversy over the basis of allegiance was complemented by a third constitutional debate about the succession. Tories, hoping to avoid any suggestion of election to monarchy, were keen to settle exactly who would accede to the English throne, and in which order. Whigs, less disturbed by the threat to the hereditary principle, were more relaxed about delineating the succession. Arguments in 1689 soon defined these differences. In the first year, the debates over the throne in the Convention were echoed by divisions on the oath of allegiance, and on the succession clauses of the Bill of Rights. Whilst Whigs pressed an early and widespread tendering of oaths to William, Tories tried to protect those unsure about the Revolution by delaying and limiting the requirement to swear loyalty to the new monarch.<sup>11</sup> As Tories attempted to tie up the English succession in a strict hereditary settlement, Whigs prevaricated.<sup>12</sup>

On religious issues, the context of party debate was also transformed by the collapse of the old Tory ideal. If Tories before the Revolution had worked to impose Anglican uniformity, that policy ceased to be an option in 1688. The first blow against it had been struck by James. The favour he had shown to Catholics and dissenters had ended royal support for the national Church, and so terminated the alliance between crown and bishops on which the Tories had traditionally relied

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<sup>10</sup> For the Tory adoption of *de facto* principles see Dickinson, Liberty and property, pp.36-9.

<sup>11</sup> See Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, pp.21-6.

<sup>12</sup> See *ibid.* pp.28, 30; Journal ... House of Commons, vol.10, p.126; Grey Debates, vol.10, pp.237-42.

for the realisation of their ideal.<sup>13</sup> James had been removed at the Revolution, but his replacement did little to brighten Tory hopes. The Prince of Orange was a known supporter of toleration, whose political position demanded he establish religious indulgence in England. Jonathan Israel has recently shown that William was not only personally committed to freedom of worship, his alliance with a wide range of Protestant and Catholic princes forbade persecution for fear of alienating his foreign friends.<sup>14</sup> In addition, the Prince was relying on Whig support in 1688/9, and was in close contact with English dissenters who had fled into exile after the Exclusion Crisis.<sup>15</sup> Tories were thus denied a monarch who would co-operate with their ecclesiastical plans, and had to resign themselves to losing an exclusive national Church.

However, if the possibility of securing the Tories' uniformity receded, this did not end partisan strife on religious issues. Both sides were galvanised into action by the changed atmosphere of ecclesiastical politics after William's arrival. The Tories were motivated by the fear that the new regime was fundamentally hostile to their Church. They were worried by the new King's preference for toleration; by his close association with non-conformists; and by disturbing events in both Scotland and England. North of the border, the victory of Williamite forces rapidly led to the disestablishment of the episcopal Church, and fuelled anxiety amongst English clerics that a similar loss of status might occur in their country.<sup>16</sup> South of the Tweed, danger loomed as it became clear that the new regime would deprive those clergy (including the primate and several bishops) who refused to swear the oath of allegiance. It thus appeared that the King

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<sup>13</sup> Tory disillusionment with James is charted in Miller, James II, especially pp.137, 148.

<sup>14</sup> Israel, "William III and toleration".

<sup>15</sup> Beddard, "Unexpected Whig Revolution".

<sup>16</sup> For the events in Scotland, see J.D.Mackie, A history of Scotland, second edition, revised and edited by Bruce Lenman and Geoffrey Parker (Harmondsworth, 1978), pp.249-253; P.W.J.Riley, King William and the Scottish politicians, (Manchester, 1979), chapters 1-2.

For the fears sparked by these events, see G.V.Bennett, "King William III and the episcopate", p.119. Fear was particularly acute because William was known to favour a union of the two kingdoms.

was about to remove several of the Church's most experienced leaders at a time when she faced a serious challenge from her enemies. In response to these perceived dangers, Tories organised to preserve Anglican dominance. From the moment of William's arrival they worked to uphold the Church's privileges (particularly the tests which reserved public office for her communicants), and sought to limit the freedom granted to dissenters. Whigs, meanwhile, saw William's advent as an opportunity to ease the plight of their non-conformist supporters. Whilst not all of the party was hostile to the Anglican Church, nor wished the establishment to lose all legal advantage, Whigs were generally less concerned to uphold the predominant authority of the Church, and wanted a generous treatment of dissent.<sup>17</sup> They were sceptical of Tory claims that widespread evasion of Anglicanism threatened social and moral chaos, and acted to secure a wide degree of religious liberty. The battle lines were drawn immediately. In March 1689, certain of the more radical Whigs tried to repeal the sacramental tests. In a series of motions and draught bills they attempted to open up national and local government posts to non-conformists, and so break one of the central guarantors of the Church's leading position.<sup>18</sup> Horror at this threat stimulated Tories to organise. On the 16th, over one hundred and fifty MPs met in the Devil's Tavern in Westminster and vowed to defend the religious establishment in the subsequent debates. Over the next weeks the Devil's Tavern group acted together to preserve the test, attack the influence of dissenters at Whitehall, and protect the old forms of Anglican liturgy and government.<sup>19</sup> Religion thus joined personal and constitutional disputes in destroying political harmony in the first months of the new regime.

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<sup>17</sup> An example of a Whig who wished to preserve the Church's monopoly of public office was the Duke of Devonshire, who voted against the repeal of the tests in 1689 - see Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, p.22.

<sup>18</sup> Journals ... House of Commons, vol.10, p.43 - an attempt on the 7th March to repeal the corporation acts; Journals ... House of Lords vol.14, p.148 - an attempt on the 15th March to abolish the tests.

<sup>19</sup> Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, p.22.



The failure to calm party politics haunted the reign. Factional struggle divided a nation the King wanted united against France, and delayed decision-making as Parliament engaged in endless partisan argument. Party also hindered the construction of ministerial teams. If William pursued his initial policy of appointing officers from both parties, he found his servants disunited, and had to watch them plotting to overthrow their colleagues. In 1689, for instance, Whigs in the government did not defend their Tory colleagues (Carmarthen, Nottingham and Halifax) when they were attacked by Whigs in Parliament.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, in the winter of 1692/3, when William again had a mixed administration, the Treasury team was so paralysed with internal dissention that it could not provide a lead in the Commons.<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, if the King tried to rely on only one group, his problems were as severe. Quite apart from his reluctance to become a prisoner of faction, William found that constructing a party administration merely crystallised opposition. The ministers' partisan enemies united in attacking the administration, and discovered that they only had to attract a few floating peers or MPs to secure an anti-government majority in Parliament. William's first attempt to rule through party came to grief in this way. The largely Tory administration which took power early in 1690 collapsed in 1693 when Whigs persuaded independent members that the King's servants could not be trusted to organise the war.<sup>22</sup> As a result of such problems, William's ministries were impermanent and shifting. The King had to update his team constantly, moving men in and out of office as he searched for an elusive formula which would guarantee stable support in Parliament. The mixed administration of 1689 became a Tory one between 1690 and 1692, before swinging back to the Whigs in the years of the mid-decade.<sup>23</sup> Party

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<sup>20</sup> For the manoeuvre within the ministry for the King's favour in this period, and the use of parliamentary attacks on ministers, *ibid.* pp.37-44.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* pp.104-114.

<sup>22</sup> Feiling, History ... Tory party, chapter 10.

<sup>23</sup> The clearest short account of these shifts is E.L.Ellis, "William III and the politicians", in Holmes, Britain ... Glorious Revolution, pp.113-134.

division had turned royal political management into a difficult and time-consuming job.

## II

Any propaganda which could address William's problems with political faction needed to satisfy a complex web of demands. Obviously, the central requirement was that a royal case contain an appeal for national unity. It had to condemn party and throw the court's weight against partisan attacks on fellow Englishmen. However, this denunciation of faction had to be made with care. William could not afford to alienate too many party politicians, as he had to work with them to secure majorities in Parliament. He was unable, therefore, to express anger at politicians too openly.<sup>24</sup> Closely linked to this need for tact, was the demand that any royal propaganda take a middle ground on the issues which divided Whigs and Tories. Since a single party could rarely control Parliament for long, the regime had to ensure it was always free to court the opposition. This meant it had to adopt a position on the royal title, the succession, and the status of the Church of England, which might appeal to both sides, and would retain its freedom to manoeuvre between them. Courtly reformation could satisfy this difficult list of demands. It could make a powerful appeal for unity, do this with a certain amount of tact, and help to construct a royal position which compromised between Whigs and Tories.

A vigorous denunciation of party battle could be easily integrated into the arguments of Burnet and his circle. All the courtly reformers had to do was to equate political division with debauchery, and then insist that William's deliverance demanded unity as part of the general post-Revolution repentance.

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<sup>24</sup> An example of the necessary restraint came in the summer of 1689. In this period William was telling Halifax of his fury at the factionalism of leading subjects, but he maintained diplomatic public relations with the men he lambasted in private, and even promoted those he scorned. See Foxcroft, Life and letters ... Savile, vol.2, pp.200-252 - especially, pp.227 - a report of a conversation of 28th July 1689, in which the King expressed fears of being caught between commonwealth and crypto-Jacobite parties. For reflections on enforced difference between William's public and private faces see Plumb, Growth of political stability, pp.68-9.

The initial step was to establish a convincing connection between party and other forms of vice. Broadly, two rhetorical techniques were used to achieve this end. First, the preachers argued that debauchery and division stemmed from the same root. They held that the two evils were manifestations of some underlying sin, which when eliminated, would cure both ills. Thomas Tenison, in his 1689 fast sermon to the House of Commons, expressed this view most clearly. Tracing all the wrongs of his day back to a self love, which blinded men to God's injunctions, he blamed this moral flaw for civil conflict as well as depravity.

From a false and unnatural Self-love it is that Discord arises and separates Brother from Brother, whilst each covets the greatest Share of the Inheritance: that Friends divide, and after Professions of the sincerest Love, exercise the bitterest Hatred.<sup>25</sup>

The second way to link division and sensuality was to stress their similar roles within history. Faction and luxury could be presented as the great weapons of Antichrist, the tools with which popery attempted to sabotage God's unfolding reformation. Burnet in particular stressed that papal agents had both debauched the righteous from their cause, and attempted to break the united front of the godly. In his thanksgiving sermon for William's invasion, he outlined the twin plan, explaining that the adversaries of reformation had advanced their projects by setting divisions between Protestants.<sup>26</sup> Preaching on the same day, Tillotson endorsed this analysis as he outlined his vision of English history.

Almost from the beginning of our happy Reformation the Enemy had sown these Tares, and by the unwearied Malice and Arts of the Church of Rome the seeds of Dissention were scattered very early amongst us; and a sowre humour had been fermenting in the Body of the Nation, both upon account of Religion and Civil Interests.<sup>27</sup>

Using these techniques, the courtly reformers could integrate party into the general run of vice. When Sharp wondered in a thanksgiving sermon

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<sup>25</sup> Tenison, Sermon against self-love, p.10

<sup>26</sup> Burnet, Sermon ... House of Commons ... 31st January, 1688, p.14.

<sup>27</sup> Tillotson, Sermon ... Lincoln's Inn ... 31st January, 1688, p.23



why God had not yet brought the English to their promised land, he blamed the following factors for the delay.

Our Ingratitude for God's former Mercies; our Lewdness and Debauchery; the Spirit of Atheism, and Prophaness, and Irreligion that still reigns among us as much as ever; and above all, our unaccountable dividing ourselves into Parties, and pursuing particular Piques and Quarrels.<sup>28</sup>

Similarly Burnet, preaching to the Corporation of London in 1690, praised the capital city, but noted it had

contracted so much guilt, is covered with so much Defilement, Luxury and Excess; is agitated with such Factions, and these acted with so much animosity, that we should share in Christ's weeping.<sup>29</sup>

Once "sins and divisions" had been so closely associated, it was easy to move on to the second stage of the argument, and set partisan politics in the context of William's providential salvation.<sup>30</sup> The bishops maintained that since 1688 was a blow struck for God's reformation, and since it demanded the English repent of all vice, then it followed that the people must renounce their sins of disunity as well as debauchery. As Tillotson put it when asking for moral reformation at the beginning of 1689,

Let us endeavour, for once, to be so wise, as not to forfeit the fruits of this Deliverance, and to hinder our selves of the benefit and advantage of it, by Breaches and Divisions among our selves.<sup>31</sup>

Burnet re-enforced this message a year later, when warning Londoners that the opportunity to repent was not being taken. According to the bishop, England was facing a "melancholy prospect" because the great work of improving upon God's deliverance was sticking in birth.<sup>32</sup> The reason for delay was not only reluctance to abandon vice, but division. Faction had made the population "sharp-sighted to find out one another's

<sup>28</sup> John Sharp, Sermon ... Whitehall the 12th Nov 1693, p.26.

<sup>29</sup> Burnet, Sermon ... Bow Church ... March 12th, 1689/90, p.3

<sup>30</sup> The quote is from Burnet, Sermon ... White-hall ... 26th Novemb. 1691, p.34.

<sup>31</sup> Tillotson, Sermon ... Lincoln's Inn ... 31st January, 1688/9, p.33.

<sup>32</sup> Burnet, Sermon ... Bow Church ... March 12th, 1689/90, pp.28, 17.

faults", but had ensured that no use was made of this perception "but to reproach others for them". Burnet concluded that although William recommended a forgiving temper, men were "so soured by the leaven of a party" that they would not avoid the heavy judgement of God by following his example.<sup>33</sup> In this way, courtly reformation became the regime's standard idiom for the condemnation of party struggle.

Paradoxically, although Burnet's language against faction was vehement, it satisfied the royal need for tact as well as vigour. It conveyed the King's case in a way which reduced the risk of alienating politicians. In the first place, the form of the propaganda - the use of clerics preaching ethical and religious reformation - may have rendered attacks on recent actions more acceptable. Churchmen, as spiritual authorities, had a recognised duty to reflect on the morality of contemporary events; and the jeremiad (the usual form of reformation rhetoric) was a familiar genre of polemic, in which it was possible to say extremely harsh things about public behaviour.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, putting appeals for unity in the mouths of men such as Burnet distanced the King from attacks upon his subjects. Sermons could hint at the monarch's exasperation, but since they did not come directly from William himself, they were less likely to be seen as royal insults of English statesmen.

The best example of this strategy in operation came in the autumn 1689. By this stage in his reign, William had become fearful that party division might nullify his gains in attaining the throne, and made urgent calls for past heats to be forgotten.<sup>35</sup> Yet, despite the pressure on the King, he did not himself express wrath at party actions. Indeed, William's personal response to his political difficulties was to launch a campaign of hospitality to try woo his leading subjects into co-

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid. pp.17-18, 30-1.

<sup>34</sup> Jeremiads had been a favourite device of the Restoration Church as it called the nation to account, see Spurr, Restoration Church, pp.236-249.

<sup>35</sup> William introduced the idea of an indemnity (to prevent parties using actions under James and Charles against each other) in a message to Parliament on 25th March, and called for it again in another message of July 12th. Journals ... House of Commons, vol.10, pp.64, 215. Passage of an indemnity bill was the one specific demand made in the King's speech opening Parliament on the 19th October.

operation. In the second half of 1689 the monarch went to Newmarket to participate in the elite's horseracing and gambling; moved from Hampton Court to Kensington to be nearer London; dined publicly at Whitehall for the first time since his coronation; and threw a magnificent ball for his birthday.<sup>36</sup> In contrast to this friendliness, anger in court circles was revealed in reformation language by the King's clerical allies. In November, Burnet preached two sermons which lambasted party politics and accused political leaders of endangering the deliverance of 1688. The first address, the 5th November sermon to the House of Lords, was a relatively mild affair, which called for repentance and stressed that division could threaten the blessing provided a year before.<sup>37</sup> The second, preached at St. Lawrence Jewry on the 26th, was an extraordinary performance, which all but named guilty parties. In an impassioned address, the bishop utilised the standard Hebraic analogy in an explicit denunciation of contemporary politicians. The sermon used Jewish history to show the sin of civil discord, and then described two groups of men who were transgressing in 1689. Its account of their behaviour left little doubt as to whom the preacher had in mind. The sermon talked of certain Englishmen who were driven by a crazed desire to destroy those who had wrestled with them in the past. Burnet denounced those who "acted with [an] extreme of fury, and under pretence of punishing past errors, seek only to gratify their own revenges".<sup>38</sup> This was certainly an attack upon the Whigs, who, at the time, were trying to limit any indemnity for past actions, in order to dislodge Tories who had served Charles and James.<sup>39</sup> On the other hand, the sermon denounced those

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<sup>36</sup> See Luttrell, Brief relation, vol.1, pp. 586, 590, 592, 595, 600. In this period the King also attended the annual Lord Mayor's banquet on the 29th October. See *ibid.* p.597. The ceremonial surrounding this last event was described in [Matthew Traubman], London's great jubilee, restor'd and perform'd on Tuesday October 29th 1689, (London, 1689).

<sup>37</sup> Burnet, Sermon ... House of Lords ... 5th November 1689.

<sup>38</sup> Burnet, Exhortation to peace and union, p.22

<sup>39</sup> Whig attempts to limit the indemnity by exempting categories of offenses (rather than a named list of offenders) from its terms, had begun in May, see Grey, Debates, vol.9, pp.244-51. For the autumn attacks on the Tories' record see Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, pp.37-8.



Englishmen who were raising up religious disputes, and wished to persecute their brethren.<sup>40</sup> This was addressed to Tories, who had just launched a full scale pamphlet offensive vilifying dissent.<sup>41</sup> As a finale to his fiery address, Burnet presented William crucified between the two parties.

If Men will forget their present Danger, and only think of former Provocations, if both sides are studying to aggravate Matters one against another, and seeking and improving all the Advantages they can find; if the repeated Interpositions of Him, to whom, under God, we owe our present Quiet, and our late Deliverance, cannot inspire us with softer Thoughts ... What must the conclusion of all this be?<sup>42</sup>

Courtly reformation thus allowed the court to use both carrot and stick in urging an end to party politics. As the King cooed and encouraged reconciliation through cordial approaches to both sides; Churchmen barked, warning the English of the brooding displeasure which lay beneath their ruler's sunny disposition.<sup>43</sup>

### III

Despite Burnet's angry growls at St Lawrence Jewry, courtly reformation was not used simply to denounce party. It was also employed to help William occupy the middle ground. On both the great issues of principle which divided Whigs and Tories, the rhetoric aided the development of a court position which might appeal to both sides. It prevented William becoming too bound up with either Whig or Tory ideology, and thus retained his freedom of political manoeuvre.

On the constitutional issues, the role of courtly reformation can be considered rather briefly. In this area, the chief concern of the court's propagandists was not to alienate Tories by becoming entangled

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<sup>40</sup> Burnet, Exhortation to peace and union, p.22.

<sup>41</sup> See below, p.228.

<sup>42</sup> Burnet, Exhortation to peace and union, p.24.

<sup>43</sup> This is not to say the Churchmen did not work behind the scenes for friendly reconciliation. It may well have been Tillotson's influence over the leading Whig, Lady Rachel Russell, which caused her to try to moderate Whig attacks on Tory ministers in the autumn of 1689. For Russell's actions, see Lois G.Schworer, Lady Rachel Russell: 'One of the best of women', (Baltimore, 1988), pp.190-192.

in the Whig position. Obviously, Whig theories on resistance, title and succession were superficially more attractive to the regime than those of their opponents. They did not (as Tory arguments might) deny the new King full legal rights to his throne, or flirt with a future restoration of the legitimate Stuarts. Yet, despite these apparent advantages of Whig theory, William's propagandists were careful to avoid espousing it as official philosophy. Whilst not openly criticising Whig ideals, the courtly reformers feared that embracing them would alienate Tories, and acted to prevent them becoming prescriptive. The Earl of Nottingham took the first step in February 1689. In the House of Lords, he advised a change in the wording of the oaths of allegiance.<sup>44</sup> He pointed out that the form of oaths used by William's predecessors would endorse Whig principles if they were applied to the new monarch, and so would risk narrowing the incoming regime's base of support. He urged the abandonment of traditional references to the King's "rightful and lawful" title, and promises of obedience to his heirs and successors, so that those Englishmen who were sceptical about the Stuarts' deposition could co-operate with the new government in conscience.<sup>45</sup> The Lords followed the Earl's advice, and new oaths were produced accordingly.<sup>46</sup> In the months that followed, courtly reformers tried to cool the issue further by limiting the number of men who would have to swear. Burnet, hoping that Churchmen would not be pushed into opposition by having to refuse William's oaths, urged Parliament not to insist that they be proffered to clergymen.<sup>47</sup> Burnet lost his battle, but he and his colleagues continued to stress that principles of non-resistance and de facto power were acceptable to the new regime, so long as they did not lead to disloyalty. Mark Goldie has shown that throughout the 1690s,

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<sup>44</sup> S.W.Singer, Correspondence ... Clarendon, vol.2, p.261

<sup>45</sup> Nottingham urged all Englishmen to swear to the new monarch as a King de facto. Browning, Memoirs ... Reresby, p.558-9.

<sup>46</sup> Journals ... House of Lords, vol.14, pp.119-120.

<sup>47</sup> The Lords accepted Burnet's suggestion that the oaths only be proffered to clergy who showed signs of disaffection, but the more Whiggish Commons threw the idea out. Burnet was a manager for the Lords in the conference between the Houses which resulted, but his chamber was eventually forced to give way. Clarke and Foxcroft, Life ... Burnet, p.272-3.

Burnet and Nottingham helped to co-ordinate a vigorous press campaign espousing de facto theories of obedience.<sup>48</sup> Similarly, the court discouraged Whig attempts at statutory recognition of William's legal position - especially when these aimed to make explicit endorsement of the royal title a qualification for office. There were a series of these Whig efforts, but none received the backing of the rulers they claimed to protect.<sup>49</sup>

The rhetoric of courtly reformation played an important role in this constitutional balancing act. It provided the new monarchs with a powerful argument for their legitimacy, which did not rely on interpreting England's fundamental law, and so did not offend either Whig or Tory positions on the constitution.<sup>50</sup> On the question of resistance, for example, the courtly reformers' central notion - that providence was the chief force behind William's accession - was compatible with both sides of the argument. The idea that God could change a nation's rulers did not directly contradict the claim that the people had the same right, and so did not offend the doctrine held by Whigs.<sup>51</sup> It was also acceptable to many Tories. This was because the chief intellectual prop of Tory theory was the surprisingly equivocal argument that monarchs were God's vicegerents on earth.<sup>52</sup> This notion, propagated vigorously by the Restoration clergy, forbade resistance to rulers because it was the same as resistance to divine will, but

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<sup>48</sup> Mark Goldie, "Revolution ... structure of political argument", pp.510-517.

<sup>49</sup> For instance, in the spring of 1690 Whigs introduced measures to enforce an abjuration of James II on all office holders, and to recognise the acts of the Convention Parliament as legal statutes. Both these of insisted on the King and Queen's title. The court manoeuvred to defeat both. Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, pp.54-6.

<sup>50</sup> For courtly reformation's autonomy from constitutional argument, see above chapter 2, section 1.

<sup>51</sup> For example, John Locke's political writings, a radical statement of the Whig's resistance case, conceded the role of providence. Locke explained that rebellion by subjects constituted an appeal to heaven. Richard Cox ed., John Locke's "Second treatise of government", (Arlington Heights, Illinois, 1982), p.147 (paragraph 241).

<sup>52</sup> For the basis of Tory theory in divine appointment of magistrates see Dickinson, Liberty and property, pp.13-33.



paradoxically gave princes little security of tenure. As both John Spurr and J.C.Findon have noted, the insistence that men must not rise against those set over them never implied that God would not remove his deputies himself.<sup>53</sup> The deity elevated magistrates for his own purposes: there was no guarantee that his unfolding plan would not overturn regimes and replace them by new rulers. Tories thus paralleled their awe for monarchy with a sense of an all-embracing providence, very similar to that found in Burnet's propaganda.<sup>54</sup>

Courtly reformation also avoided entering the dispute on William's title. Overwhelmingly it concentrated on godly magistracy and Protestantism as the justifications for William's rule. It was the fact that the King beat down popery, and was prepared to lead the nation to righteousness which argued for loyalty to him, not his precise position in law.<sup>55</sup> Courtly reformers even stayed remarkably clear of the issue of succession. Although they welcomed the removal of an heir in 1688 who would certainly be raised a Catholic (James II's son), the propagandists did not generally espouse any strict position on the inheritance of the English crown. In fact, their rhetoric was so centred on William that it tended not to reflect on the future. In reformation propaganda, the death of the King was treated less as a potential political problem, which would pose the question of succession, than as a possible apocalypse - God's ultimate punishment on the English for not living up

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<sup>53</sup> Findon, "The non-jurors" p.131; Spurr, "Virtue, religion and government".

<sup>54</sup> William Lloyd was careful to stress that the line taken by the courtly reformers was perfectly consistent with old Anglican dogma. See William Lloyd, A discourse of God's ways in dispensing of kingdoms, part 1 (London, 1691), especially the epistle to the reader.

<sup>55</sup> The courtly reformers did continue to produce some tracts basing William's title on legal argument. See, for example, Burnet's paper prepared for the peace negotiations at Ryswick - A memorial drawn up by king William's special direction, intended to be given in at the Treaty of Ryswick, (London, 1705). However, they generally kept such arguments quite separate from their reformation rhetoric. Often as in Burnet's Sermon ... coronation, the illegalities of James' rule were woven into accounts of its debaucheries, but this did not usually lead into a precise exegesis of the English constitution.

to his reformation.<sup>56</sup> Describing the horror of William's demise thus prevented the need to look beyond it, and again avoided taking a recognisably Whig or Tory line.

#### IV

The role of courtly reformation in religious disputes must be considered at much greater length. This is partly because matters of faith remained the main cause of division between Whig and Tory in the 1690s. Not only did the legacy of bitterness between Anglicans and dissenters carry over from Charles II's reign; political circumstances served to concentrate debate on ecclesiastical issues. The Revolution's religious arrangements were slow to emerge in 1689, and were completed, not by a definitive settlement, but by the failure of a royal policy which left many matters ambiguous and contested.<sup>57</sup> Religious issues will also have to be studied in depth because the thesis to be offered here is controversial. Below, it is suggested that the bishops used a rhetoric of reformation to pursue a ecclesiological compromise between Whig and Tory. This goes against the grain of much historiography, which has presented reformation in the 1690s as essentially hostile to Tory ideals. Portraying the movement as part of a "Whiggish" programme to conciliate dissent, many scholars have not recognised that moral renewal (at least as promoted by Burnet and his allies) could find a theological middle ground between the parties.

Two broad strands of historiography have contributed to this "anti-Tory" interpretation of reformation. First, there has been an attempt to identify a "latitudinarian" Churchmanship within the Restoration establishment. This has presented the key courtly reformers as unusually sympathetic to dissent, and has seen interest in moral reform as a badge of their position. The background here was a standard

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<sup>56</sup> This line was pressed particularly hard at the time of Mary's death, an event presented as a presage of what might happen to William. See Wake, Of our obligations, p.22; Burnet, Essay ... late queen, pp.192-3. It also featured at the time of an plot to assassinate the King in 1696 - see Edward Fowler, A sermon preached before the House of Lords in the Abbey-Church at Westminster, upon Thursday the Sixteenth of April, 1696, (London, 1696), especially p.23.

<sup>57</sup> For the failure of policy, see below, section V.

account of the Church before 1688. Traditionally, uniformity has been portrayed as the overwhelming objective of the clergy under Charles and James. In the works of numerous scholars, pre-revolutionary Anglicans were assumed to have been so shocked by the religious chaos of the Interregnum that they devoted all their efforts to preventing its recurrence. Seeing safety in universal acceptance of episcopacy and the Prayer Book, they were believed to have made the achievement of this their priority.<sup>58</sup> Within this interpretation, William's future propagandists were seen as mavericks. Historians sensed that a group of clerics around Tillotson, Patrick and Fowler were strangely uninterested in uniformity, and began to investigate the intellectual roots of their attitude. Labelling these men "latitudinarians", they began trace their distinctive philosophy, and concentrated on ideas which set them apart from the bulk of their Church.<sup>59</sup> Accordingly, latitudinarians were believed to have held a broad view of Protestantism, which did not fit with the desire of their colleagues to persecute non-Anglicans. They were thought to have sought a simple definition of Christianity which might transcend denominational divisions; and were presented delving into linguistic analysis and natural science in pursuit of this objective. Most importantly, moral reform was seen as a cornerstone of latitudinarian philosophy. Tillotson and his circle were reputed to have advanced virtue as the most important end of religion, and to have stressed that morality was the heart of the simple gospel through which

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<sup>58</sup> This basic picture of the Church is expounded in the leading works on the Restoration establishment, however much they disagree on other areas of ecclesiastical and political interpretation. See Robert Beddard, "The Restoration Church" in Jones, Restored monarchy, pp.155-176; Paul Seaward, "Gilbert Sheldon and the London vestries", in Goldie et al, Politics of religion, pp.49-75; N.Sykes, From Sheldon to Secker; Bosher, Making ... Restoration settlement; Green, Re-establishment ... Church; Seaward, Cavalier Parliament, pp.162-176;

<sup>59</sup> The term "latitudinarian" entered the language in the period 1659-62 as a term of abuse in the battle between those Churchmen who had taken posts under the Republic, and those who had not. For examples of its use, see [Simon Patrick?], A brief account of the new sect of latitude men, together with some reflections on the new philosophy, (London, 1662); Matthew Sylvester, Relique Baxterianae: or Mr Richard Baxter's narrative of the most memorable passages of his life and times, (London, 1696), part 3, pp.19-20 - this reports the term was part of the general coinage of abuse at the end of the Interregnum.



they hoped to unite all Protestants.<sup>60</sup> The result of this historical framework was to suggest that reformation was hostile to Tory ideals. By presenting spiritual and ethical renewal as the programme of an unusually tolerant party in the Church, study of latitudinarianism implied that there was some opposition between support for Anglican uniformity, and enthusiasm for moral reform.

This impression was strengthened by a second strand of historical writing. The study of attempts to amend manners in the 1690s has also tended to present reform in connection with appeals to non-conformity. Most importantly, the glut of works on the societies for reformation has stressed how they involved dissenters as active participants in their campaigns. Although reluctant to label these bodies "Whig" (their membership was far too heterogenous for that), their students have emphasised the broad religious base of the societies, and the hostility they engendered from clerics who worried about the influence of non-conformists.<sup>61</sup> In particular, Craig Rose has read the whole movement for moral reform in the 1690s as an attempt to dissolve Anglican exclusivity. According to him, the reformers' purpose was to foster a "godly union" of all types of Protestants, who would ignore their denominational claims in a united fight for righteousness.<sup>62</sup>

The historiography just reviewed was not misdirected. The ideal of reformation did contain an ecumenism which William's propagandists used to appeal to dissenters. As has been shown, the courtly reformers developed the notion of a common, European Church, which encompassed many different varieties of Protestantism within its definition of the

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<sup>60</sup> For this general interpretation of latitudinarians see, B.J.Shapiro, Probability and certainty in seventeenth century England, (Princeton, 1983); Jacob, Newtonians; Isabel Rivers, Reason, grace and sentiment: a study of the language of religion and ethics in England, 1660-1780. Volume 1, Whichcote to Wesley, (Cambridge, 1991), pp.25-88, especially pp.30-34; J.Gascoigne, "Politics, patronage and Newtonianism: the Cambridge example", Historical Journal, 27 (1984), pp.1-24; G.R.Cragg, From puritanism to the age of reason, (Cambridge, 1966).

<sup>61</sup> Craig, "Movement ... reformation of manners", pp.96-7; though for the societies diverse membership see pp.295-300; Isaacs, "Moral crime", p.169. Issacs does here associate the societies with Whig politics.

<sup>62</sup> Rose, "Providence, Protestant union". See also, Mark Goldie, "John Locke, Jonas Proast".

godly.<sup>63</sup> Within England, this conception was used to comfort non-conformists. It assured them that they would not be vilified under the new regime, and that they could be full participants in the new godly nation. As early as the winter of 1688/9, the rhetoric was deployed in order to build bridges to dissent. A general Protestant reconciliation was preached as an integral part of William's providential deliverance. In their first sermons, Burnet and his allies suggested that the recent decline of godliness could not be blamed solely on the moral failings of rulers and people. It also stemmed from the division of Englishmen into sects. Disunity, and the spirit of persecution, had cracked the united front of Protestantism, and so sapped the fight for God's cause. Squabbles between reformed Christians had weakened spiritual supervision of the population; had helped papists plot discord; and had allowed debauchery to grow unchecked. Now the renewal permitted by William's arrival must include Protestant co-operation, so that all good men could struggle for purgation together.<sup>64</sup> Throughout the decade, this early message was repeated. The societies for reformation were its highest expression. Not only did these bodies recruit members from both Church and dissent, they organised their promotional activities to stress the importance of such joint participation. The regular London sermons to the societies were preached to mixed congregations and alternated between a dissenting venue, Salters Hall, and the Anglican church of St Mary le Bow.<sup>65</sup> Ministers from both sides took to the pulpits, and all of them praised the societies' spirit of co-operation.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> See above, chapter 4, section IV.

<sup>64</sup> Burnet, Sermon ... St James ... 23rd December 1688, p.28; Burnet, Sermon ... House of Commons ... 31st January 1688, p.33; Tillotson, Sermon ... Lincoln's Inn ... 31st January, p.23; Patrick, Sermon ... St James ... 20th January 1688; Simon Patrick, A sermon preached at St Paul's Covent-Garden, on the first Sunday in Lent; being a second part of the sermon preached before the Prince of Orange, (London, 1689); Simon Patrick, A sermon preached before the Queen at Whitehall, March 1, 1688/9, (London, 1689).

<sup>65</sup> A full list of the preachers at these two venues is given in Craig, "Movement ... reformation of manners", p.216.

<sup>66</sup> Not only did the sermons to the societies repeatedly stress ecumenism, Protestant co-operation also formed one of the chief justifications of the bodies' activities in their promotional literature, see [Josiah Woodward], Account ... societies for reformation

Yet such ecumenism was only half the picture. If established historiographies have correctly pointed out the Williamite appeal to dissent, they have done a disservice by preventing a balanced assessment of royal propaganda as a whole. Most existing interpretations of the Restoration Church, and most histories of the reformation movements of the 1690s, have drawn too stark a distinction between the courtly reformers and Tories. They have distracted attention from parts of the royal case which might appeal to the more rigid breeds of Churchmen. The ideology of reformation was not, in fact, hopelessly entangled with the conciliation of dissent. The rhetoric could criticise, as well as comfort, non-conformists, and could be used in an attempt to reassure established clerics of their status under the new regime.

Before demonstrating the "Tory" aspects of reformation in the 1690s, it is worth noting two strands of historical revisionism which have helped pave the way for their recognition. One of these strands has been a re-evaluation of the Restoration Church. Recent work on the Anglican establishment before 1688 has begun to dissolve the picture of courtly reformers as a maverick group, whose espousal of moral reform was a sign of their heterodoxy. In particular, the work of John Spurr has allowed an appreciation of the common ground between the supposed latitudinarians and the bulk of their colleagues. In the first place, Spurr's investigation of the general tenure of Restoration churchmanship has demonstrated that the concerns of the courtly reformers were very similar to those of the Church in general. Whilst Spurr has acknowledged obsession with uniformity amongst Caroline clergy, he has complemented this with a description of their sense of providence and religious mission.<sup>67</sup> He has outlined an ecclesiastical philosophy under Charles which was founded on concern about God's judgements on England, and on a corresponding anxiety about national sin. In Spurr's view, the characteristic features of the Church after 1660 were not only the defence of the Prayer Book and episcopal authority, but also a feeling of challenge, an urgent awareness that the English must be persuaded to

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of manners, p.27.

<sup>67</sup> Spurr, Restoration Church, chapters 5 and 6; Spurr, "Virtue, religion and government".



righteousness in order to avoid divine smiting. In consequence, they joined in an endless call for repentance which became their corporate anthem.<sup>68</sup>

Spurr has also helped to re-evaluate the supposed latitudinarians. Along with other scholars, he has questioned the extent to which their views on dissent differed from those of their colleagues. Spurr himself has argued that, apart from a brief period in the early 1660s, the latitudinarians were not identified by contemporaries as a separate group in the Church, and did not exhibit the peculiar attitudes ascribed to them by many historians.<sup>69</sup> Other scholars have provided evidence that men like Tillotson and Patrick joined a united Anglican defence of a monopolistic national Church, and were not unduly sympathetic to dissent. Amongst others, Richard Ashcraft and John Marshall have shown that supposed latitudinarians helped to develop a view of non-conformists as undisciplined schismatics.<sup>70</sup> Echoing their colleagues, the future courtly reformers condemned separatists as heinous sinners, who had not only disobeyed Christian injunctions to peace and union, but had placed their own wilful opinions above the guidance of spiritual authority.

This revision of the Restoration Church reduces the impression that the courtly reformers' initiatives were the programme of a unusually tolerant group of clerics. Instead, Spurr's work reveals that

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<sup>68</sup> Spurr, Restoration Church, pp.236-249.

<sup>69</sup> Spurr, "'Latitudinarianism'"; John Spurr, "The Church of England, comprehension and the Toleration Act of 1689", English Historical Review, 104 (1989), pp.927-946.

<sup>70</sup> Richard Ashcraft, "Latitudinarianism and toleration: historical myth versus political history", in Richard Kroll, Richard Ashcraft and Perez Zagorin eds, Philosophy, science and religion in England, 1640-1700 (Cambridge, 1991) pp.151-177. In the same volume, John Marshall, "John Locke and latitudinarianism", pp.253-282, draws a clear distinction between Locke's tolerationism and the less indulgent views of the "latitudinarians". Mark Goldie, "The theory of religious intolerance in Restoration England", in Grell et al, From persecution to toleration, pp.331-368, does not set out to refute the idea of an identifiable latitudinarian party, but does use writers often identified as latitudinarians as examples of the prevailing Anglican cult of uniformity. Gordon J.Schochet, "From persecution to 'toleration'", in J.R.Jones ed., Liberty secured? Britain before and after 1688, (Stanford, Ca., 1992), pp.123-157, uses the same authors to demonstrate the general lack of sympathy for dissent within the Church.

reform was promoted by men who had been loyal apologists for the old establishment. The Williamite platform of moral and religious renewal was not an alternative to entrenched Anglican ideals, but was rather the continuation of a crusade begun by the very institution Tories wished to defend. The reformers' language of transgression, providence and repentance was familiar from the rhetoric of the Restoration clergy; and many reforming initiatives under William can be traced back to the activities of the Caroline Church.<sup>71</sup>

The second historiographic revision to suggest a "Tory" face to reformation, was that attempted in chapter three of this present work. Above, it was noted that study of reform has been dominated by work on narrow aspects of the phenomenon - especially the societies for reformation of manners.<sup>72</sup> Such concentration, it was argued, had distorted the significance of the movement by underestimating its court face.<sup>73</sup> This, however, was not the only effect of the historiography. It also generated a "Whiggish" interpretation of the initiatives, because it was in the societies that calls for a tolerant co-operation between Protestants were most strong. When attention is shifted away from these bodies and towards the wider range of reforming activity, a different picture emerges. It becomes clear that the chief sponsors of the movement were sympathetic to aspects of Tory ecclesiology, and used their purging rhetoric to reassure Tories about the position of their beloved Church. As the 1690s wore on, each new sign of ecclesiastical anxiety was met by a vigorous burst of Williamite propaganda, which intertwined an insistence that the establishment was safe, with calls for national renewal. Despite a series of setbacks, Burnet and his allies retained a belief that they could appeal to committed Churchmen, and put faith in courtly reformation as their chief instrument of persuasion.

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<sup>71</sup> For some of these links see John Spurr, "The Restoration Church of England and the moral revolution of 1688", Walsh et al, Church of England; Duffy, "Primitive Christianity revived".

<sup>72</sup> See above, chapter 3, section I.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

## V

The propagandists began their struggle to reassure Tories on the 14th January, 1689. Then Sharp, Tillotson, Tenison, Patrick and Fowler met in Stillingfleet's house in London.<sup>74</sup> At an initial glance, this conference might appear to have endangered Tory ideals, since the clerics discussed possible concessions which might be made to dissent. Yet, although the courtly reformers were intending to make overtures to non-conformists, their talks were also designed to preserve the Church's dominant position in society. The origins of their initiative lay less in some radical latitudinarianism, than in an approach made the previous summer by William Sancroft, the archbishop of Canterbury, to the leaders of London's dissenting community. Sancroft, who had always been an unbending supporter of a monopolistic Church, had suggested that Anglicans might consider concession as the price of strengthening themselves in the battle with James' popery. He was thinking of bringing dissenters back into the Church to restore its universal government of English Protestants, and so add to its authority.<sup>75</sup> This basic intention was retained by the courtly reformers the following winter. When, in February, their discussions were translated by Nottingham into two parliamentary bills, the design was still to secure the Church's predominant position. Nottingham put forward a toleration bill to meet William's demand for freedom of conscience: but this proposed only a limited indulgence for non-conformists, who would still be excluded from public office by the tests.<sup>76</sup> The Secretary's main hopes were fixed on his second measure, a bill of comprehension, which was intended to re-incorporate all but a irreconcilable rump of dissenters into the national Church.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Patrick, Autobiography, p.141.

<sup>75</sup> Sykes, From Sheldon to Secker, pp.85-91; George Every, The High Church party, 1688-1715, (London, 1956), pp.20-24.

<sup>76</sup> The text of this act as passed in May is produced in Browning, English historical documents, pp.400-3.

<sup>77</sup> Horwitz, Revolution politicks, pp.86-90.



Sadly for Nottingham and his allies, the plans ran into two difficulties. The first was the failure of William to give them his full backing. Although the King had benefitted from his alliance with Nottingham's clerical affinity, the ecclesiastical settlement was one area in which he disagreed with his propagandists. Here William's preference for a generous toleration contradicted the clerics' desire to preserve the Church's dominance. In mid-March, this difference became public when the King gave a speech to Parliament which appeared to question the religious tests.<sup>78</sup> The Secretary's second problem was Tory reluctance to accept the reassurances in his religious package. In 1689, anxiety amongst Tories about William's religious policies had driven them away from Sancroft's earlier conciliatory position. Even though Nottingham's settlement was designed to strengthen their Church, Tories backed away from conceding points of liturgy and ecclesiastical government to dissenters. Consequently when the reformers' measures reached Parliament, Tory Lords cut down the scope of the proposed concessions in the comprehension bill, and the Commons added clauses to the coronation oath which would bind the King to uphold the Church in its current form.<sup>79</sup>

The Tory rage was a considerable setback for Nottingham and his clerical allies. However, it does seem to have had one good result. The vehemence of the Churchmen's reaction appears to have altered the King's position. The details of court politics in this period are patchy, but in early April William does seem to have turned his back on the Whig advisers who had accompanied him from Holland, and to have come under greater influence from his Secretary. Contemporary rumour held that the King had begun to follow Nottingham in ecclesiastical affairs, and the monarch's change of tack after his March speech appeared to bear this out.<sup>80</sup> With the stance of court and courtly reformers more closely allied, Nottingham's circle was freer to re-enforce its reassurance of

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<sup>78</sup> The speech was given on the 16th, and contained an appeal that "all Protestants, that are willing and able to serve" should be allowed to take up public office. Journals ... House of Commons, vol.10, pp.51.

<sup>79</sup> Horwitz, Revolution politicks, pp.90-1; Grey, Debates, vol.10, pp.190-8, 200-4.

<sup>80</sup> For the rumours, see Bodleian Ballard Ms. 45 f. 35.

Tories. The next move came on the 9th April, when the Commons was due to discuss the comprehension bill coming down from the Lords. Before debate started, Sir William Harbord, a Privy Councillor, who was almost certainly acting on court instructions, rose to suggest that instead of discussing the measure, the House should address the King on the ecclesiastical settlement. Harbord proposed that MPs first thank the monarch for his concern for the Church of England, and then request that Convocation, the Church's own legislative body, be called to consider the issue of comprehension.<sup>81</sup> Both these proposals were intended to help William conciliate the Tories. When the parliamentary address was presented, the gratitude expressed in it gave the King an opportunity to make a formal statement of his support for the establishment. Replying to the parliamentarians words, William wrote

As My Design in coming hither [to England] was to rescue you from the Miseries you laboured under; so it is a great Satisfaction to Me, that, by the Success GOD has given Me, I am in a Station of defending this Church, which has effectually shewn her Zeal against Popery, and shall always be My peculiar Care".<sup>82</sup>

The second proposal in Harbord's speech was designed to calm fears of compromise with dissent. The idea of calling Convocation followed suggestions made by Burnet and Stillingfleet to involve the clergy in any scheme of comprehension. They had argued that Anglican ministers (and by implication their Tory allies), would be happier to accept plans for re-union, if they could be confident that no settlement would be imposed against their will.<sup>83</sup> Thus the presentation of the Commons address gave the King an opportunity to endorse a conciliatory position.

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<sup>81</sup> Horwitz, Revolution politicks, pp.92-3. For the establishment of the committee to draw up an address, see Journals ... House of Commons, vol.10, p.84. The address itself is printed in Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, cols.216-8.

<sup>82</sup> Journals ... House of Lords, vol.14, p.183. The exchange of messages was published as The address of the Lords and Commons, to the King's most excellent Majesty, for maintaining the Church of England as by law established, with His Majesty's most gracious answer thereunto, (London, 1689).

<sup>83</sup> See Historical Manuscripts Commission, Report ... Finch, vol.2, p.194 - Stillingfleet to Nottingham, 8th March. Burnet supported an entirely clerical Commission to decide on alterations, and complained that he lost Whig respect as a result. Clarke and Foxcroft, Life ... Burnet, pp.274.

He accepted the call for Convocation in his reply, and moved the plan forward in September, when he appointed an Ecclesiastical Commission to prepare suggestions for consideration by that body.<sup>84</sup>

The language of courtly reformation played a central role in developing this attempted reassurance of Tories. It was first used to comfort Churchmen in the sermons preached by Burnet and his circle early in 1689. Above, it was stressed that these early reformation sermons denounced persecution, and advocated mutual Protestant understanding as an integral part of the deliverance of England.<sup>85</sup> Here, it should be noted that they did not simply comfort dissent. They were preached as Nottingham's scheme of union was being planned, and can be seen as an attempt to prepare public opinion for it. The sermons did condemn persecution, but, in accordance with the policy of re-uniting Protestants in the Anglican communion, they also made it clear that dissenters must end their separation at this providential moment. They emphasised that, after God's deliverance, there had to be mutual accommodation. The divine purpose in recent events had been to re-establish a united English ecclesia - not to uphold the non-conformists' right to schism.<sup>86</sup> These reflections on dissent were carried furthest by William Wake in May. Preaching at Hampton Court, he delivered a millennial hymn to unity on the text "grant you be like-minded one towards the another".<sup>87</sup> In his address, he looked forward to a "general reformation" to be marked by universal harmony; but he hinted at two possible hindrances to this blessing.<sup>88</sup> First, Wake's appeal for tolerant attitudes suggested he still feared the old persecuting spirit of the establishment. Second, however, he echoed Restoration arguments

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<sup>84</sup> Calendar of state papers domestic, 1689-90, p.242-3.

<sup>85</sup> See above, footnote 64.

<sup>86</sup> The early sermons spoke of re-union as well as tolerance and harmony, and stressed that achieving this was a job for all English Protestants.

<sup>87</sup> William Wake, An exhortation to mutual charity and union among Protestants in a sermon preach'd before the King and Queen at Hampton Court, May 21, 1689, (London, 1689).

<sup>88</sup> Ibid. p.33.



about the stubbornness of non-conformists.<sup>89</sup> Speaking of those had objected to the details of Anglican liturgy, he said

[Those] who at this day separate from us, for the sake of those few Constitutions that have been made for the Order and Decency of our Publick Worship, must for the same reason have separated from all the Churches of the Christian World, for above 1500 Years.<sup>90</sup>

Wake had thus adapted the idiom of reformation to criticise dissent, as well as to succour it. Even more significantly, he had associated the new monarchs with this balanced point of view. His May sermon was originally delivered at court and was ordered to be printed by Their Majesties' special command.

As 1689 wore on, and the full depth of Tory fear was revealed, the courtly reformers were ever more careful to stress elements in their rhetoric which soothed Churchmen's worries. Particularly, the burden of their message shifted from the need for reconciliation with dissent, to the crucial role which the establishment would play in William's reformation. Although they continued to insist that Protestant harmony would help the King's godly crusade, the propagandists also began to emphasise that the personnel and institutions of the Church would be the main engine of renewal. William was shown to be counting on the Anglican clergy as his elite troops in the battle for righteousness. This move allowed the reformers to address the Tories' central anxiety - the suspicion that the new King was hostile to the establishment. If the Church could be portrayed as the chief instrument of William's purgation, it naturally followed that he would want to defend its position in society, and strengthen its spiritual provision and authority.

In fact, with the help of reformation rhetoric, William could be slotted into the traditional Anglican ideal of monarchy. Apologists for the English establishment had always stressed the benefits of having the King as Supreme Governor of the Church. They had pointed out that the English owed their Reformation to royal action in the 1530s, and that subsequent monarchs, whilst not enjoying sacerdotal power, had been

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid. pp.26-8.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid. pp.27-8.

invaluable protectors and guarantors of the Church's ministry.<sup>91</sup> This argument had come under some pressure after 1660, when some clerics had developed a less Erastian defence of Anglicanism; but, as John Spurr has shown, the case for royal supremacy had not been challenged directly, and the ideal of a godly prince, who understood the ecclesiastical duties of English kingship, remained at the heart of Church ideology.<sup>92</sup> Courtly reformation allowed William to turn this Anglican belief in royal supremacy to his advantage. He could reassure Churchmen by presenting himself as their ideal of a godly governor: a man who would defend and strengthen the establishment as he used it to fulfil his providential mission.

The key element in this strategy was the warrant issued in September 1689 to institute the Ecclesiastical Commission to prepare reforms for the coming Convocation. The wording of this document was almost certainly determined by Nottingham and his clerical allies. It embraced proposals which had been circulating amongst the Earl's affinity through the summer, and nominated all the leading members of Nottingham's circle to the body it instituted.<sup>93</sup> In its first paragraph, the warrant put the case for comprehension. It opened the way for concessions to dissent by stating that the precise form of worship in the Church was "indifferent and alterable".<sup>94</sup> The second paragraph, however, turned to the theme of moral renewal. This passage is crucial for the development of courtly reformation, because it represented the first occasion on which William himself went beyond mere rhetorical acceptance of his godly magistracy, and suggested a concrete, practical

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<sup>91</sup> For the Tudor and early Stuart development of these doctrines, see Clare Cross, The royal supremacy in the Elizabethan Church, (London, 1969), and Patrick Collinson, The religion of the Protestants, (Oxford, 1982), chapter 1.

<sup>92</sup> Spurr, Restoration Church, pp.163-4.

<sup>93</sup> Tillotson, Stillingfleet, Patrick, Burnet, Sharp, Kidder, and Tenison served. For suggestions within Nottingham's circle that the Church be reviewed along the lines mentioned in the warrant see Lambeth Palace Library Ms. 1743, ff.111-118, 151-153 - Stillingfleet and Tillotson's proposals for Church reform in 1689. See also Bodleian Additional Ms A 191, f.103 - Nottingham to Burnet, 19th September 1689.

<sup>94</sup> Calendar of state papers domestic, 1689-90, p.242.

initiative to amend England's manners. Listing a series of reasons for summoning the clerics, the warrant stated that

... the book of canons is fit to be reviewed, and made more suitable to the state of the Church; ... there are divers defects and abuses in the ecclesiastical courts of jurisdiction, and particularly there is not sufficient provision made for the removing of scandalous ministers and for the reformation of manners, either in ministers or people; and ... it is most fit that there should be a strict method prescribed for the examination of such persons as desire to be admitted into Holy Orders, both as to their learning and manners.<sup>95</sup>

What is remarkable about this first concrete project for reformation was that it was to be Church-led. It assigned the task of moral purgation to the personnel and institutions of the Anglican establishment. The warrant's consideration of ordinands stressed the importance of an exemplary Anglican priesthood in encouraging virtue. The concern to remove scandalous ministers spoke to the same purpose. The proposals about ecclesiastical courts suggested an improvement of clerical discipline, in which the clergy's legal authority over the population could be strengthened to enforce popular righteousness.<sup>96</sup> The September warrant, therefore, implicitly countered the Tories' perception of William as hostile to their Church. By suggesting that the new King intended Anglican ministers to retain considerable spiritual influence, and by presenting William as the author of schemes to remedy the Church's shortcomings, the document portrayed the monarch as a faithful ecclesiastical governor. Consequently, the third and final paragraph of the warrant could open with a reassuring statement of the King's love for the Anglican communion. Their Majesties, it claimed, were motivated, not only by the desire to reconcile differences amongst their subjects,

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> For spiritual courts, their operation and effectiveness in the earlier seventeenth century see Martin Ingram, Church courts, sex and marriage in England, 1570-1640, (Cambridge, 1987). Spurr, Restoration Church, pp.209-19, surveys many of the problems associated with ecclesiastical jurisdiction under Charles II, but John Addy, Sin and society in the seventeenth century, (London, 1989), and C.E.Davies, "Enforcement of religious uniformity", show the potential for vigour even after the Restoration.



but also by "their pious and princely care for the ... order, edification, and unity of the Church of England".<sup>97</sup>

These tactics were continued into the autumn. Almost as soon as the September warrant had been issued, a pamphlet attacked it. William Jane, the Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, refused to be comforted by the document's pro-ecclesiastical passages, and in his anonymous Letter to a friend, lambasted it for its conciliation of dissent.<sup>98</sup> He strongly objected to altering ecclesiastical constitutions at a time of turmoil, and attacked the clerics chosen to prepare concessions as ambitious traitors. In the ensuing exchange, several pieces were written to defend the King's initiative. Most were anonymous, and it is unclear how large a hand the royal propagandists had in their production. One of them, however, is known to have been written by Tenison. His Discourse of the Ecclesiastical Commission answered Jane's charges by using reformation arguments to stress the advantages to the Church of William's rule.<sup>99</sup> His key tactic was to use the September warrant, with its vision of reform through the establishment, to prove that the royal initiative "tended to the well-being of the Church".<sup>100</sup> After defending the men William had named on the Commission as loyal Anglicans, he quoted the whole document to demonstrate that in the King's order

there is no unreasonable Thing design'd, neither is it at all probable that the Commissioners should pervert the good Ends of It. ... The Support, and Improvement, and Well-being of the Church is directly aim'd at.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Calendar of state papers domestic, 1689-90, pp.243.

At the same time as the warrant was being prepared, Tillotson and his circle were working on a new book of homilies, which would place Anglican preaching at the fore-front of reformation. See Burnet, Some sermons, preface to essay, starting p.193 (only this page paginated).

<sup>98</sup> [William Jane], A letter to a friend, containing some quearies about the new Commission of making alterations in the liturgy, canons &c of the Church of England, [London, 1689].

<sup>99</sup> [Thomas Tenison], A Discourse concerning the Ecclesiastical Commission open'd in the Jerusalem-Chamber, October 10th, 1689, (London, 1689).

<sup>100</sup> Ibid. p.1.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid. p.13.

Tenison also used the warrant to develop the image of William as a faithful protector of the establishment. He drew parallels between the new reforming King, and archetypal virtuous governors of the Church such as Edward VI, James I and Elizabeth. The Discourse compared the 1689 Commission to ones issued by earlier monarchs to strengthen and edify the establishment. It placed the latest body in the tradition of Commissions in 1549, 1559, and 1603-5, which had produced the Prayer Book, the Church's articles of religion, and the translation of the Bible.<sup>102</sup> Most powerfully, Tenison used the King's September commission to suggest that William had actually revived godly Church government after a damaging lapse. He stated that the ecclesiastical duties of English monarchy had been ignored in the late reigns, and that it was only with the advent of William's reforming rule that they had again been taken up. Pointing a finger at the Restoration Stuarts, he observed that

no Warrant could be procur'd for the Support and Improvement of the Church, during the reign of King Charles the Second; much less were we to expect it from King James.<sup>103</sup>

This argument was calculated to appeal to Tory Churchmen who, as John Spurr and Mark Goldie have shown, had become increasingly disenchanted with recent Kings, and had been pushed to the brink of resistance by their ecclesiastical indifference.<sup>104</sup>

William himself joined in stressing the ecclesiastical benefits of his rule. As Nottingham's scheme moved forward, he repeatedly expressed his love and concern for the Church, and hinted that his providential reform of the country would strengthen its position. In the late summer and autumn he praised the establishment on several public occasions. Narcissus Luttrell noted that,

His majestie hath been lately pleased to expresse himself in favour of the church of England as the best constituted church in the world, and nearest to the primitive; and that

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid. pp.2-3

<sup>103</sup> Ibid. pp.24-5.

<sup>104</sup> Spurr, Restoration Church, p.248, charts clerical unease at Charles II's behaviour. Goldie, "Political thought ... Anglican revolution", in Beddard, Revolutions of 1688, pp.102-136, charts how royal attacks upon the position of the Church led to the development of an Anglican political theory which could be subversive of royal power.

he was resolved to die in its communion, and to venture his life in defence thereof.<sup>105</sup>

This theme was taken up in the speech at the opening of Parliament on the 19th October. In this the King called the English establishment "one of the greatest supports" of the Protestant religion, and asserted his readiness to "venture his life" in its defence.<sup>106</sup> Like Tenison, William used his encouragement of the reforming work of the Commission to portray his faithful ecclesiastical government. When Convocation finally met in November to consider the Commissioners' proposals, the King asked its members to see themselves as helping him to secure and improve their Church. In a message delivered by Nottingham, and then published as a broadside, he assured them

His Majesty has summoned this convocation not only because it is usual upon holding of a Parliament, but out of a pious zeal to do everything that may tend to the best establishment of the Church of England, which is so eminent a part of the reformation ... and therefore does most signally deserve and shall always have both his favour and protection; and he doubts not but that you will assist him in promoting the welfare of it, so that no prejudices, with which some men have laboured to possess you, shall disappoint his good intentions or deprive the church of any benefit from your consultations.<sup>107</sup>

Subsequent communications re-enforced the message that the King wished to protect the Church as he pursued reform through it. On the 26th November, he wrote to the bishop of London, who was acting as president of Convocation, granting the body authority to discuss the package of measures mentioned in September warrant.<sup>108</sup> Two weeks later the King "authorised and required" the bishop to raise the problem of

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<sup>105</sup> Luttrell, Brief Relation, vol.1, p.606.

<sup>106</sup> Journals ... House of Lords, vol.14, p.320; This was published as William III, His Majesties most gracious speech to both Houses of Parliament, the 19th day of October, 1689, (London, 1689).

<sup>107</sup> Calendar state papers domestic, 1689-90, p.314 - message from the King to Convocation, 4th November, 1689. This was published as, William III, His Majesties gracious message to the Convocation sent by the Earl of Nottingham, (London, 1689).

<sup>108</sup> Calendar state papers domestic, 1689-90, p.332 - royal warrant granting authority to Henry Compton, bishop of London, 26th November 1689. This was published as William III and Mary II, A copy of the King and Queen's Commission sent to the Convocation now assembled at Westminster, [London, 1689].



shortcomings in the Church's moral jurisdiction, ordering Convocation to consider proposals for "taking away the abuses relating to excommunication in the ecclesiastical courts".<sup>109</sup>

Unfortunately for the courtly reformers, the immediate impact of their propaganda was disappointing. The sense of unease in Tory circles persisted through the second half of 1689, and fuelled a continuing mistrust of Nottingham's plans. Sancroft came out against comprehension, and several clerics who had been nominated to the Commission, but came from outside courtly reforming circles, either refused to attend, or walked out after its first meetings.<sup>113</sup> Worst of all, a Tory political machine began to work for the election of a Convocation which would oppose any changes to the Church. G.V.Bennett has shown that a group of men centred on Henry Aldrich's Deanery in Oxford which co-ordinated efforts to return intransigent clerics.<sup>114</sup> As a result, the courtly reformers' programme was doomed. When Convocation met, Tillotson's bid to become Prolocutor (speaker of the Lower House, composed of non-episcopal clergy) was defeated by William Jane, and the body was almost immediately addled by disputes between its two chambers.<sup>115</sup> Once Convocation had demonstrated its log-jammed uselessness, the King was forced to prorogue it, and it was dissolved in January when new elections for Parliament were called. The courtly reformers had thus failed to conciliate Tory Churchmen and had consequently lost their preferred ecclesiastical settlement. Although their measure of toleration had passed in the late spring of 1689, its terms now applied to a substantial number of English Protestants, not to a marginalised rump as had been hoped.

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<sup>109</sup> Calendar state papers domestic, 1689-90, p.354 -the King to the bishop of London, 12th December 1689.

<sup>113</sup> Every, High Church party, 37-59; Sykes, From Sheldon to Secker, p.87.

<sup>114</sup> L.S.Sutherland and L.G.Mitchell eds, The history of the University of Oxford. Volume 5, The eighteenth century, (Oxford, 1986), pp.24-9.

<sup>115</sup> A contemporary account was given in "An historical account of the present Convocation", printed as an appendix to [Thomas Long], Vox cleri: or the sense of the clergy concerning making alterations in the established liturgy, (London, 1690).

However, this setback did not end the use of courtly reformation as an appeal to Tory Anglicans. The propaganda campaign of 1689 had not convinced its audience, but curiously, its failure opened up new possibilities for the rhetoric. Whilst comprehension was still an option, Nottingham and his supporters had been bound to support it, and had consequently undermined their attempted reassurance of Tories by adherence to that unacceptable measure. Once, however, it was clear that union was impossible, the royal spokesmen could play down those parts of their propaganda which had been found offensive. After 1689, the new bishops did not generally use reformation rhetoric to advocate Anglican concessions to non-conformity.<sup>116</sup> Instead, they highlighted the benefits to the Church of William's purgation, and stressed the image of the faithful ecclesiastical governor which they had welded on to the King's godly persona.

The court's first ecclesiastical initiative after the loss of comprehension was the letter William wrote to Compton in February 1690.<sup>117</sup> There is no evidence of who had the idea for this epistle, but its tone suggests the men who had worked to reassure Tories in 1689 were behind it. Essentially, the letter repeated the rhetorical strategies which had been used the preceding autumn. Once again, it confirmed the Church's importance to the new regime, by ordering the pursuit of a royal reformation through the establishment. For instance, the letter indicated that the Church was to be at the core of the King's action against vice, by requiring Anglican ministers to read out and preach upon the laws against debauchery.<sup>118</sup> The royal epistle also contained proposals to strengthen the clergy's influence, and again connected schemes to remedy known ecclesiastical deficiencies with the drive for

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<sup>116</sup> The one exception came in the summer of 1697, when it was rumoured that Tenison was considering reviving comprehension plans. Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, p.223.

<sup>117</sup> Calendar of state papers domestic, 1689-90, p.460. For discussion of this document as part of the general campaign of courtly reformation, see above, chapter 3, section V.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid. The letter stated "You [the bishops] shall order the clergy to preach frequently against those particular sins and vices which are most prevalent in this realm, and, on every Lord's Day on which such sermon shall be preached, they shall read such statutes as are provided against such sins."

national righteousness. The programme of Church renewal, which had been contained in the September warrant, now reappeared: though this time it was to be implemented by direct royal order. The February letter, echoed William's words of six months before, insisting on measures to improve the quality of the clergy. The King instructed bishops to

examine into the lives and learning of those desiring to be admitted into holy orders, to see that the clergy are resident in their livings, and to admonish them to religiously observe the canon as to sober conversation.<sup>119</sup>

The epistle also repeated the attempt to breathe new life into the Church's system of moral jurisdiction, ordering "all churchwardens to impartially present [before the ecclesiastical courts] all those guilty of adultery and fornication."<sup>120</sup>

The bishops too continued the tactics of 1689. After the failure of comprehension, they worked for the sort of ecclesiastical renaissance promised by William's September warrant, and presented their efforts as proof of the reforming regime's care for the establishment. At the core of their strategy was the attempt to improve the workings of the Church through their own episcopal influence and authority. G.V.Bennett, writing of the style and energy of William's bishops, claimed that they set new standards of diligence. He suggested that Tillotson and his colleagues paid more attention to their dioceses than had been usual, and struggled harder to improve spiritual provision within them.<sup>121</sup> If this claim implied negligence on the part of the courtly reformers' predecessors, it may be misleading, since there are good examples of energetic and conscientious bishops under Charles and James.<sup>122</sup> Yet,

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> As a result of such suggestions, Burnet could claim that the King's letter offered proof of royal "zeal for this our Church". Bodleian Additional Ms. D 23 f.85 - Burnet, letter to the clergy of his diocese, probably 1690.

<sup>121</sup> Bennett, Tory crisis, pp.22-3; G.V.Bennett, "Archbishop Tenison and the reshaping of the Church of England", Friends of Lambeth Palace Library, Annual Report, 1981, (London, 1981) pp.10-17, especially p.14. Neither of these assertions is footnoted.

<sup>122</sup> See, for example, Seth Ward's work as revealed in E.A.O.Whitehead, "The episcopate of Dr. Seth Ward, bishop of Exeter (1662-1667) and Salisbury (1667-1688/9), with special reference to the ecclesiastical problems of his time", (Oxford, D.Phil, 1951); also William M.Marshall, "Episcopal activity in the Hereford and Oxford



there can be no doubt of the enthusiasm which William's men took to their episcopal duties. Perhaps spurred by the stirring sermons delivered at their consecrations, they arrived at their Cathedrals determined to encourage a spiritual awakening amongst the clergy in their charge.<sup>123</sup> The bishops most were concerned to ensure a high standard of parish ministry in their sees. They were, therefore, quick to address abuses such as non-residence, the admission of unsuitable men to the ministry, and scandalous living. They were also careful to get to know their clergy through extensive tours into the localities, and used pastoral letters and their powers of visitation to shift out inadequate pastors.<sup>124</sup> As primate, Tillotson's scope for action was even wider. Like his royal master, the new archbishop attempted to pursue the ends of the 1689 ecclesiastical reforms through his personal authority. During his time at Canterbury, he discussed remedies for the Church's shortcomings with his colleagues, and used his metropolitan power to impose them. In 1692, for instance, a meeting of bishops, called by Tillotson at Lambeth Palace, led to a circular letter to all the dioceses of the province. This demanded action to ensure strict control over ordinations;

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dioceses, 1660-1760", Midland History 8 (1983), pp.106-122

<sup>123</sup> For consecration sermons, see Horneck, Sermon ... Fulham ... Easter day, 1689; John Scott, A sermon preached at Fulham on Sunday Oct.13, 1689 at the consecration of ... Edward, Lord bishop of Worcester, Simon, Lord bishop of Chichester, (London, 1689); Ralph Barker, A sermon preached at St. Mary le Bow on Whitsunday, May xxxi, 1691 at the consecration of ... John, Lord archbishop of Canterbury, (London, 1691); Joshua Clarke, A sermon preached at St. Mary le Bow on Sunday the 5th July, 1691, at the consecration of ... John, Lord archbishop of York, and ... Edward, Lord bishop of Gloucester, (London, 1691);

<sup>124</sup> Richard Kidder, The charge of Richard, Lord bishop of Bath and Wells to the clergy of his diocese at his primary visitation begun at Axebridge June 2 1692, (London, 1693); Amy Edith Robinson ed., The life of Richard Kidder, D.D. bishop of Bath and Wells, written by himself, (Frome, 1924), pp.64-5; Patrick, Bishop of Ely's letter; Patrick, Letter of the bishop of Chichester; Patrick, Autobiography, pp.155-8; Gilbert Burnet, Injunctions to the arch-deacons of the diocese of Sarum, (London, 1690), Burnet, Four discourses; Edward Stillingfleet, The bishop of Worcester's charge to the clergy of his diocese in his primary visitation, begun at Worcester, Sept 11, 1690, (London, 1691); Sharp, Life of Sharp, vol.1, pp.265-6;

residence at cures; removal of scandalous clergy; and rigorous moral discipline over flocks.<sup>125</sup>

All this activity was explicitly linked to William's reformation, and was employed to highlight the King's beneficial government of the Church. The episcopal messages which demanded higher clerical standards also ordered ministers to implement the government's moral reform by organising fasts and obeying royal proclamations.<sup>126</sup> This implied that the bishops' attempts to build a strong and effective Church were central to the wider project sponsored by the King. Similarly, Tillotson used his attacks on clerical abuses to polish William's image as a friend of the establishment. Surviving letters from 1694 catch the primate and his allies in the very process. In his last months of life, the archbishop began to consult with Burnet and Stillingfleet about issuing further orders to tighten control of ordination.<sup>127</sup> Early in the deliberations, Tillotson raised the suggestion that these measures should be introduced by royal injunction rather than on his own authority. Partly this was because this would give them a more secure legal basis, but the metropolitan also admitted to Burnet that he had "another reason which moved me herein".<sup>128</sup> He was concerned "that Their Ma[jesties] concernm[ent] for religion and the Church might appear to the nation."<sup>129</sup> This careful nursing of public relations was refined further in September when Tillotson mentioned the project to the Queen. She proved a even craftier master of political advertisement with her suggestion that the injunctions wait until William returned from Flanders. She worried that producing the orders solely in her name might create the suspicion that she was the only one of the royal couple to

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<sup>125</sup> British Library Additional Ms. 4236 f.253 - letter from Tillotson to Burnet, 12th April, 1692; Bodleian Tanner Ms. 25 ff.15-16 - heads of a circular letter by Tillotson to be sent to his suffragans.

<sup>126</sup> Sharp, Life of Sharp, p.265; Burnet, Four discourses, preface p.4; Patrick, Bishop of Ely's Letter, pp.8-9; Kidder, Charge of Richard, Lord bishop, pp.18-9.29-30.

<sup>127</sup> British Library Additional Ms. 4236 f.257-8 - Tillotson to Burnet, 10th September, 1694

<sup>128</sup> Ibid. f.258.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

care about the Church.<sup>130</sup> Burnet too can be caught using ecclesiastical reform for propaganda purposes. In a memorandum to William in January 1696, he recommended that the King give up his income from first fruits and tenths and apply them to augment poor livings.<sup>131</sup> This was a scheme, eventually realised as Queen Anne's Bounty, which would have increased the money the Church could offer to its ministers, and so would have improved pastoral provision in many poorly-served parishes.<sup>132</sup> However, whilst stressing the spiritual advantages of his idea, Burnet also emphasised its value as publicity. In the memorial, and in a follow-up note of the next year, the bishop commended his scheme to his master saying it would "give such an impression of him [the King], as would have a good effect on all his affairs".<sup>133</sup>

The bishops' appeal to Tory Churchmen can even be traced through two of the most substantial works of theology published in the 1690s. The volumes in question, the Discourse of the pastoral care (1692), and the Exposition of the thirty nine articles (1699) were written by Burnet, but were both products of the whole courtly reforming circle. They had been inspired and supervised by Tillotson, and had been read by the Queen and Burnet's episcopal colleagues, prior to publication.<sup>134</sup> At first sight, the claim that these works contained an appeal to Tories

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid. f.261 - letter from Tillotson to Burnet, 10th September 1694.

<sup>131</sup> Bodleian Additional Ms. D 23 ff.112

<sup>132</sup> The best works on Queen Anne's Bounty are Geoffrey Best, Temporal pillars: Queen Anne's Bounty, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and the Church of England, (Cambridge, 1964); Peter Virgin, The Church in an age of negligence: ecclesiastical structure and the problems of Church reform, 1700-1830, (Cambridge, 1987), pp.64-74. See also Ian Green, "The first years of Queen Anne's Bounty" in Rosemary O'Day and Felicity Heal eds. Princes and paupers in the English Church, 1500-1800, (Leicester, 1981), pp.231-254.

<sup>133</sup> Bodleian Additional Ms D 23 ff.112, 115.

<sup>134</sup> Burnet, Discourse ... pastoral care, p.124; Burnet, Exposition of the thirty nine articles, preface - this states the book was read by Tillotson, Mary, Sharp, Tenison and Stillingfleet in 1694; Bodleian Additional Ms. D 23 f.61 is a letter from Tillotson to Burnet dated 23rd September 1694, praising him on the Exposition and offering suggestions; British Library Additional Ms. 4236 f.253 is a another letter from the archbishop dated 12th April 1692, reporting he has read and slightly amended the Discourse, and left it with the Queen.



may seem surprising. Recent studies of the Discourse and the Exposition have suggested that they were polemical pieces, deeply hostile to Tory ecclesiology. Mark Goldie, working on the Discourse, has linked it to Locke's advocacy of toleration; and has interpreted it as an attempt to replace the Tories' persecuting Church with a non-coercive ministry.<sup>135</sup> Similarly, Martin Greig, reviewing the Exposition, has presented it as an appeal for a flexible approach to the articles, which might allow concessions to dissent.<sup>136</sup> There is much in these arguments. The Discourse certainly deplored religious intransigence, and the theological methodology of the Exposition were clearly loathed by some breeds of Tory Churchmen.<sup>137</sup> However, it is doubtful that the bishops' sole aim in producing the volumes was to condemn Tory churchmanship. The works were, in many ways, a stout apology for Anglican principles, which might have been intended to garner Tory support. Burnet claimed that his Exposition provided the first comprehensive defence of the Church's beliefs against her sophistical enemies; and it is questionable how far his argument for religious indulgence in the other work went. Far from consistently conciliating dissenters, the Discourse could criticise their stubbornness - reminding them that the legal tolerance they had gained did not absolve them from the duty to seek Christian unity.<sup>138</sup> Moreover, the Discourse was not dominated by an appeal for concessions to non-conformists, but by a pastoral vision of the clergy's work, centring upon exemplary piety, charity and discipline. This vision was not a party platform, but was shared by all breeds of Anglican, including those most hostile to dissent.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Mark Goldie, "John Locke, Jonas Proast".

<sup>136</sup> Martin Greig, "The thought and polemic of Gilbert Burnet, ca.1673-1705", (Cambridge PhD, 1991), chapter 5.

<sup>137</sup> For a Tory campaign against the Exposition in the late 1690s, see Greig, "Thought and polemic", pp.223-244.

<sup>138</sup> Burnet, Discourse ... pastoral care, p.101.

<sup>139</sup> Attempts, led by G.V.Bennett, Tory crisis, pp.22-4, to identify parties in the Church on the basis of pastoral style seem unconvincing. In the 1690s Churchmen such as Thomas Sprat who was classified as a "High" (intolerant) Churchman by Bennett, could write about pastoralism in very Burnetian terms - see Thomas Sprat, A discourse made by the Lord bishop of Rochester to the clergy of his diocese at his visitation in the year 1695, (London, 1695). Henry Rack, Reasonable enthusiast: John

Given this, it is possible to read the Discourse and the Exposition as further episcopal efforts to win over Tories. Studied in the light of the courtly reformation campaign, the two volumes can be seen to have employed all the standard devices to reassure those worried about the establishment. The Discourse opened with an impassioned appeal for moral and spiritual renewal in the wake of the Revolution. It spoke of a nation plucked from the fire, which must amend its ways if it were not to be thrown back into the conflagration.<sup>140</sup> It then presented the Church as the prime instrument of this necessary purgation. In the preface, Burnet told his clerical audience that they had the greatest responsibility at this time.

We who are the Priests and Ministers of the Lord, are under more particular Obligations, first to look into our own ways, and to reform whatsoever is amiss among us, and then to be Intercessors for the People, committed to our Charge.<sup>141</sup>

In the body of the text, the author showed how the ministry must lead the people to righteousness. He told them they must reform their flock by example; by clerical discipline; by proper performance of public worship and by preaching which brought home the gravity of sin.<sup>142</sup> Finally, the Discourse used the royal programme of reformation, in conjunction with its reliance on the establishment, to demonstrate that the Church would be protected and strengthened by the new monarchs. In the dedication to Queen Mary, Burnet spoke of the "great designs for which God hath raised you up", and repeated Tenison's assertion that

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Wesley and the rise of Methodism, (London, 1989), p.14, argues that Anglicans could not be divided into different traditions by differing ministerial agenda. Rupp, Religion in England, p.74 suggests that an underlying pastoral consensus was more important than superficial divisions. Stephen Taylor, "Church and state in the mid eighteenth century: the Newcastle years", (Cambridge PhD, 1987), appendix, explained that his thesis avoided talking of Church parties because the terms used to describe them were too slippery. See also W.Jeremy Gregory, "The eighteenth century reformation: the pastoral task of the clergy after 1689", Walsh et al, Church of England, and the introduction to that volume.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid. preface.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid. preface, p.x.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid. chapters 8 and 9.

William and Mary stood in the great tradition of faithful ecclesiastical governors.

Tho Your MAJESTY'S Royal Ancestors have done so much for us, there remains yet a great deal to be done for the compleating of our Reformation, especially as to the Lives and Manners of men. This will most effectually be done by obliging the Clergy to be more exemplary in their Lives, and more diligent and faithful in the discharge of their Pastoral Duty. And this Work seems to be reserved for Your MAJESTIES, and designed to be the Felicity and Glory of Your Reign.<sup>143</sup>

At the book's conclusion, the monarchs became the great inspiration for ecclesiastical renaissance. The clergy were told that William and Mary might preside over a golden age of the Church, if their desires were implemented.

While we have such an invaluable and unexampled blessing, in the Persons of those Princes whom God has set over us; if all the considerations which arise out of the Deliverances that God has given us by their Means, of the Protection we enjoy under them, and of the great hopes we have of them: If, I say, all this does not oblige us, to set about reforming of every Thing that may be amiss or defective among us, to study much and to labour hard; to lead strict and exemplary Lives, and so to stop the Mouths, and overcome the Prejudices of all that divide from us; this will make us look ... cast off and forsaken of God.<sup>144</sup>

Despite its rather different subject matter, the Exposition of the thirty nine articles complemented the Discourse's line. In the second work, Burnet placed his theological defence of Anglicanism in the context of moral and ecclesiastical reform, and insisted that William was the inspiration for this renewal. In a fulsome dedication to the King, the author thanked him for his encouragement of the Church, and again set his monarch in the context of his illustrious predecessors.

The Title of Defender of the Faith, the Noblest of all those which belong to this Imperial Crown, that has received a New Lustre by Your MAJESTY'S carrying it, is that which You have so Gloriously acquired, that if Your MAJESTY had not found it among them, what You have done must have secured it to Your self by the Best of all Claims. ... May God Preserve

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid. epistle dedicatory.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid. p.125.



Your MAJESTY, till You have gloriously finished what You have so wonderfully carried on".<sup>145</sup>

## VI

Having outlined the ways in which courtly reformation was used to ameliorate party strife in the 1690s, it is time to ask how effectively it did its work. Obviously, the language's basic denunciation of division was a failure. Burnet's censures on partisan behaviour in 1689 fell on deaf ears, and party remained a source of division through William's reign. Indeed, it is arguable that disputes between Whigs and Tories became more divisive as new issues began to join the old trinity of personnel, constitution and religion.<sup>146</sup> On the other hand, it seems possible that reformation had more effect in preventing the alienation of politicians from the King. For most of the 1690s the court avoided becoming so associated with either party, that it could not negotiate with their opponents. The pattern of shifting ministries continued to the very last year of the reign, when the King turned to Tories and then back to Whigs within the space of a few months.<sup>147</sup> Perhaps the only time when a party became completely detached from the court was in the aftermath of the assassination plot of 1696. Then, the Whigs had briefly succeeded in enforcing the principle that only those who swore to William's rightful and lawful authority were eligible for public office.<sup>148</sup>

Quite how much Williamite rhetoric contributed to this continuing freedom of manoeuvre, is, as ever, difficult to assess. Over

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<sup>145</sup> Gilbert Burnet, Exposition of the thirty-nine articles, epistle dedicatory.

<sup>146</sup> As the decade wore on, there was a greater tendency for Tories to adopt "country" attitudes, and so for corruption in government, standing armies, and limitation of the prerogative, to become issues between Tories and Whigs. See below, chapter 6, section V.

<sup>147</sup> For these events, see Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, chapter 12; Feiling, History ... Tory party, chapter 12.

<sup>148</sup> For the assassination plot, see Garrett, Triumphs of providence. For the Whig attempt to exclude Tories in its wake, see Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, pp.175-6. William seems to have been reluctant to follow the Whigs policy, even when they dressed it as an attempt to prevent another attempt upon his life.

constitutional issues, it seems likely that it was not courtly reformation which kept all groups in play, so much as the decision not to endorse a particular interpretation of the legal basis of William's rule. In the field of faith, however, there is good evidence that reformation propaganda prevented too serious a rupture between the court and party politicians. It comes from the response to the regime's language by the religious constituencies of the Whig and Tory parties. In the 1690s, both the Whiggish dissenters, and those members of the clergy who co-operated with Tory attempts to defeat comprehension, found the Williamite position sufficiently attractive to adopt. Although the two groups stressed rather different aspects of the royal ideology, courtly propaganda proved flexible enough to be rehearsed by both non-conformists and anti-comprehensionists in their own political and religious discourses. Thus, despite their wide disagreements in other fields, men who supported the different parties endorsed key points of William's rhetoric. This might suggest that the polemic was having some success in keeping Whigs and Tories open to the benefits of the King's rule.

The case of the dissenters is the clearer. There were at least three good reasons why non-conformists in the 1690s might want to adopt courtly reformation arguments. First, many dissenters saw themselves within a "puritan" tradition, which had always placed great stress on personal and national righteousness. The programme of purgation and renewal announced by William's regime would have been reassuringly familiar to non-conformist leaders such as Richard Baxter and John Howe, who had made their names in the moral reform movements of the mid-century.<sup>149</sup> Second, courtly reformation could be used to argue for a generous ecclesiastical settlement. As has been shown, the rhetoric's broad conception of the true Church, and its reflections on the evils of Protestant division, suggested that orthodoxy should not be too rigidly

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<sup>149</sup> For the involvement of these men in both 1650s and 1690s religious movements see William Lamont, Richard Baxter and the millennium: Protestant imperialism and the English Revolution (London, 1979); Rose, "Providence, Protestant union".

defined, and that nobody should be persecuted for minor disagreements over liturgy or Church government.<sup>150</sup>

Third, the royal rhetoric could calm fears about the position of dissent after 1689. Although it was clear that non-conformists would be more secure under William than under the Restoration regimes, their exact place in society was still worryingly ambiguous. Particularly, it was uncertain how far they had been readmitted to full citizenship. On the negative side, the principle of free worship had not been explicitly endorsed in 1689. The measure of toleration granted had been worded so that it simply suspended the penalties for dissent, and the test acts remained to exclude non-Anglicans from public office. On the positive side, indulgence permitted non-conformists a new economic and social prominence; whilst lax enforcement of the test, and the practice of occasional conformity, permitted some of them to behave as if fully emancipated.<sup>151</sup> Dissenters were thus in a difficult position. They became prominent in society, gaining visible wealth and power; but could be attacked by Tories for assuming illegitimate and illegal influence. In this situation, courtly reformation could be extremely comforting. It stated that dissenters should not be marginalised because they were potential members of William's godly nation. The dissenters might thus exploit the court's language to integrate themselves with their fellow subjects. In their sermons to the societies for reformation of manners, for instance, non-conformist divines repeatedly took up the Williamite equation of zeal for reformation with patriotism, and used it to suggest that godly dissenters were full members of the national community. Edmund Calamy used precisely this technique when preaching in 1698. Sinners, he argued, undermined their nation's security. By contrast,

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<sup>150</sup> After the coronation in 1689, a delegation of leading London non-conformists asked the King to remove strict rules of conformity as a route to a godly utopia. An address of the dissenting ministers (in and about the City of London) to the King and Queen, upon their accession to the crown (London, 1689).

<sup>151</sup> The legal, social and economic position of dissent in the period after 1689 is well surveyed in Michael R. Watts, The dissenters, pp.346-366 and R.K. Webb "From toleration to religious liberty", in Jones, Liberty secured?, pp.158-198. For an appreciation of how influential non-conformists became in the economy and government of London see de Krey, Fractured society.



Sinners, he argued, undermined their nation's security. By contrast, "We" [his reformation society audience, including many non-conformists] shall show our selves Lovers of our King and Country, by helping forward the Execution of those good Laws which are in force amongst us, against Prophaness and Debauchery; the general, common and un-opposed Breach whereof, would open a wide Gap for the most desolating Calamities to enter and over-flow us.<sup>152</sup>

Daniel Williams, speaking at the same venue a few months earlier, had shared these views, stating that the reformers were

preventing those Calamities which will return with Aggravations, if these evils be not Reformed. Ezra. 13,14.

You are providing the surest way to revive our Trade, prolong our Peace, and recover England's Glory. If you succeed, Bodies and Minds will be freed from the sad Effects of the Debaucheries, which are as fatal as apparent.<sup>153</sup>

John Shower described men's national loyalty and treachery wholly in terms of their attitude to the societies' work. On one hand the motives for supporting the bodies were "the publick interest of the kingdom", "the honour of our nation and city", "love and loyalty to the King's Majesty".<sup>154</sup> On the other hand,

They who are negligent in this, and other Instances of Publick Service, which their Place and Station in this City call them to, they betray their Country, are unfaithful to their Trust, and shall answer to God for their ommissive Treachery.<sup>155</sup>

Given the attractions of the rhetoric, it was not surprising that non-conformists in the 1690s became enthusiastic advocates of courtly reformation. The first hint of their attachment came on the 2nd January 1689. Then, a delegation of around ninety dissenting ministers went to William to thank him for his deliverance of the Protestant religion, and

<sup>152</sup> Edmund Calamy, A sermon preach'd before the societies for reformation of manners, February 20 1698/9, (London, 1698), p.33.

<sup>153</sup> Daniel Williams, A sermon preached at Salters-Hall to the societies for reformation of manners May 16 1698, (London, 1698), p.53.

<sup>154</sup> John Shower, A sermon preach'd to the societies for reformation of manners in the Cities of London and Westminster ... November 15 1697, (London, 1698), pp.46, 64.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid. p.65.

to promise backing for his attempts to secure it.<sup>156</sup> Later, as the new King's propagandists elaborated their case, dissenters lent their support. Not only did they reinforce the courtly reformers' words, they even took the initiative in developing aspects of the rhetoric. For instance, after the coronation of William and Mary in April, the dissenting ministers of London addressed the new monarchs to congratulate them on the event. They expressed the same sort of near-millennial hopes for the King's rule which had dominated Burnet's sermon at the service, and then went on to provide one of the earliest portraits of the Queen as the exemplary powerhouse of national renewal.

'Tis an auspicious Sign of publick Felicity, when Supreme Virtue and Supreme Dignity meet in the same Person. Your inviolable firmness in the profession of the Truth, and exemplary Piety, are the most Radiant Jewels in your Crown. The lustre of your Conversation, unstain'd in the midst of tempting Vanities, and adourn'd with every Grace, recommends Religion as the most honourable and amiable Quality, even to those who are averse from hearing Sermons, and apt to despise serious Instructions and Excitations to be Religious.<sup>157</sup>

Dissenters were also careful to share the burden of propagating the royal case. They observed the national fasts and thanksgivings called by the regime, and ensured that their ministers both preached and published appropriate sermons. One congregational divine, Timothy Cruso, was particularly active from the beginning. He printed much of his pulpit oratory in 1689, including his sermon on the 31st January thanksgiving for William's arrival; his address on the 5th June fast day for the war; and his preaching in the autumn on Gunpowder Day. All these echoed themes laid down by the established Williamite clergy.<sup>158</sup> Non-conformists

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<sup>156</sup> The address of the nonconformist ministers (in and around the City of London) to His Highness the Prince of Orange, (London, 1689).

<sup>157</sup> Address of the dissenting ministers ... accession to the crown, pp.6-7.

<sup>158</sup> Timothy Cruso, The mighty wonders of a merciful providence, in a sermon preached on January 31, 1688, being the day of publick thanksgiving ... Prince of Orange, (London, 1689); Timothy Cruso, The Churches plea for the divine prescence to prosper humane force, in a sermon preached June 5, 1689, being the day appointed for a general fast, (London, 1689); Timothy Cruso, The excellency of the Protestant faith as its objects and supports, in a sermon preached November 5th, 1689, (London, 1689).

also joined in on other occasions when the court encouraged the English to reflect on William's reformation. For example, they participated wholeheartedly in the national mourning for Queen Mary in 1694. Following the official line set by the bishops, they reviewed Mary's efforts for moral renewal, reminding their audiences of her personal virtues, and insisting that her death must signal renewed efforts for reformation under her grieving spouse.<sup>159</sup> The Peace of Ryswick in 1697 provided another opportunity for dissenters to spread the word. William Bates produced a speech to the King which congratulated him on his victories over popery, and insisted there were "more noble victories" to be won against "prophaness in manners" on the domestic front.<sup>160</sup> Bates told William he hoped national sins

by Your Authority and Influence, may be Restrain'd, if not truly Reform'd; for whereas other Princes assume an Infamous Prerogative to Live as they List, to satisfie their Vicious Appetites without Controul; Your MAJESTY Exhibites such Excellent Vertues in Your Practice, as may be a Persuasive Pattern, and Commandingly Exemplary to Your Subjects.<sup>161</sup>

John Howe, the veteran Presbyterian, echoed these sentiments, calling for the establishment of a true Israel now that peace allowed William to concentrate on righteousness at home.<sup>162</sup>

At first sight, the Tories' religious constituency - anti-comprehensionist Anglicans - do not seem to have been as enamoured of courtly reformation as non-conformists. The case put by Nottingham's circle in 1689 to persuade Churchmen of the merits of union was disastrously unsuccessful. Not only were many clerics unconvinced by the argument for an ecclesiastical settlement, several actively countered it

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<sup>159</sup> See John Howe, A discourse relating to the much-lamented death and solemn funeral of our incomparable and most gracious Queen Mary, of most blessed memory, 2nd edition (London, 1695), p.38; William Bates, A sermon preached upon the much lamented death of our late gracious sovereign Queen Mary, (London, 1695). The latter sermon was printed along with an address of condolence to William by the Dissenting ministers of London.

<sup>160</sup> William Bates, "Dr. Bates congratulatory speech to the King, Novemb. 22 1697 in the name of the dissenting ministers in and about London", printed as the preface to John Howe, A sermon preach'd on the late day of thanksgiving Decemb. 2 1697, (London, 1698).

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Howe, Sermon ... Decemb. 2 1697, (London, 1698).



with a press campaign of their own. Jane's Letter to a friend was only the first shot in a barrage of pamphlets, which lasted until 1690.<sup>163</sup> Most of these were anonymous, but G.V.Bennett has connected some of them with Aldrich's group at Christ Church.<sup>164</sup> Taken together, the tracts reveal the existence of a body of writers who were prepared, not simply to oppose the conciliation of dissent, but to question the very logic of courtly reformation which had been used to promote it.

At the most basic level, the pamphleteers savaged the King's spokesmen themselves. They accused those who served on the 1689 Ecclesiastical Commission of having no firm convictions, and of being too prepared to bend to circumstance in pursuit of their own ambitions.<sup>165</sup> The attack was not merely personal, however. As they made their case against concession, anti-comprehensionists undercut some of the key assumptions of reformation rhetoric. Most damagingly, they questioned whether a corrupt Catholicism was the most important enemy a

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<sup>163</sup> Apart from Jane's pamphlet the most significant of these were [Thomas Long], The healing attempt examined and submitted to Parliament and Convocation, whether it be healing or hurtful to the peace of the Church (London, 1689); [Long], Vox cleri; To the reverend and merry answerer of "Vox cleri", [1690]; A just censure of the answer to "Vox cleri", (London, 1690); William Beveridge, A sermon preach'd before the Convocation of the bishops and clergy of the province of Canterbury at Westminster, Novemb. the 18th 1689, (London, 1689); [Henry Maurice], Remarks from the country; upon the two letters relating to the Convocation and alterations in the liturgy, (London, 1689/90); Thomas Grice, A short vindication of the constitution of the Church of England endeavouring to prevent all future quarrels and protestations, (London, 1689); [John Willes], The judgement of the foreign reformed Churches concerning the rites and offices of the Church of England shewing there is no need of alteration, (London, 1690); M.M., Letter from the Member of Parliament, in answer to the letter of the divine, concerning the bill for uniting Protestants, [1689]; Vox laici; or the laymen's opinion touching the making alterations in our establish'd liturgy, (London, 1689); The danger of the Church of England from a general assembly of the Covenantors in Scotland, (London, 1690); The Church of England and the continuation of the ceremonies thereof vindicated from the calumnies of several late pamphlets (london, 1690); The lay man's religion humbly offered as a help to a modest enquiry every man into his own heart, (london, 1690).

<sup>164</sup> Sutherland and Mitchell, History ... University of Oxford, pp.27-8 - Jane and Maurice are identified as part of the Christ Church circle.

<sup>165</sup> [Maurice], Remarks from the country, pp.1-3; [Long], Vox cleri, p.37. John Spurr, "Latitudinarianism", p.38, notes that it was in 1689 that the old insulting party names used to describe Tillotson and his allies in the early 1660s were revived.

true Christian had to face. In defending the old constitution of the English Church, they used two arguments which suggested non-Anglican Protestants were the real adversary. First, they re-iterated an extreme version of the moral pathology of dissent which had been developed amongst Restoration clerics. In anti-comprehensionist rhetoric, dissenters were once again vilified as sinful schismatics who had abandoned all restraint in their worship of their own opinions. They were not just proud and obstinate; they were wholly ungovernable. They were ambitious and hate-filled men, who sensed an opportunity to pull down the clergy who had tried to control them.<sup>166</sup> The pamphlets were full of images of the Church as a fortress, with enemies at its walls, whose garrison must resist suicidal appeals to open the gates.<sup>167</sup> Second, the anti-comprehensionists made a case for the English hierarchy as the sole form of a true Church. After the Restoration, some Anglican writers had begun to stress the aspects of their establishment, particularly episcopacy, which set it apart from other Protestant bodies. They had turned away from traditional ecclesiology, which had seen the English Church as a branch of a wider reformed Christendom, and had begun to deny full validity to communions which did not share the peculiar features of the English ecclesia.<sup>168</sup> In 1689, when the Church was in danger of alteration to conciliate dissent, these tendencies emerged more stridently. The sense of immediate threat brought a more vivid insistence that the English hierarchy as the model which all other Churches must follow. As one author put it,

Is it necessary to Reform that Church which is confest to be the best Reformed Church in the world; that Church to whose

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<sup>166</sup> Lay man's religion, pp.21-4; Church ... continuation of ceremonies, pp.2, 9, 30, 51-8; [Grice], Short vindication, pp.16-17; Danger of the Church; Beveridge, Sermon ... convocation ... Novemb.18, preface by J.G., the translator - the sermon was originally delivered and published in Latin; [Maurice], Remarks from the country, p.11; Long, Vox cleri, pp.1-10.

<sup>167</sup> Long, Vox cleri, pp.10, 12. [Jane], Letter to a friend, p.6.

<sup>168</sup> For the development of episcopal theory and the problems in caused in accepting foreign Protestant communions as true Churches, see Spurr, Restoration Church, pp.132-165.

Pattern all the rest do desire, and only want power and opportunity to conform their own?<sup>169</sup>

Between them, these arguments threatened to replace the notion of Antichristian popery (on which Williamite propaganda depended) with a different account of God's enemies, which might call into doubt the reformer's defence of the new regime. Instead of isolating popery as the great source of sin, against which all reformed Christians must unite, anti-comprehensionists perceived a true Church besieged by a variety of adversaries, of whom some breeds of Protestants were as dangerous as Catholics. This exclusive view of godliness might, if developed further, threaten the whole Williamite case. It might make it difficult to sell a foreign Calvinist, who had not joined the Anglican communion before 1688, as the leader of God's cause on earth, and as a providential deliverer of the English people.

Yet despite this potential threat to the Williamite position, it is important not to overplay the anti-comprehensionists' opposition to courtly reformation. Analysis of the pamphleteers' efforts makes it clear that the dangerous parts of their case were developed with the narrow and specific purpose of defeating comprehension. There is no evidence that a systematic, wholesale refutation of Burnet's thought had been worked out within Tory circles. Although some elements of the reformers' case were undermined, large parts of it, those which did not directly argue for Anglican concessions, were left unmolested. The pamphleteers did not, for instance, cast any doubt on the belief that James' fall had been a providential act of God, or that moral renewal might follow the Revolution. Even the challenge to the more ecumenical aspects of Williamite argument was limited to the purpose of defeating

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<sup>169</sup> Long, Vox cleri, p.12. See also, Church ... continuation of the ceremonies, preface.

Some pamphleteers argued that the special godliness and purity of the Church was proved by God's providential protection of it from both papists and sectaries, see Beveridge, Sermon ... convocation ... 18 Novemb., p.4; Vox laici, p.8.

In Convocation this type of thinking was evident in the Lower House's objection to the proposed address of thanks proposed to the King. The lower clergy protested that expressing gratitude for the zeal William had shown for "the Protestant religion in general, and the Church of England in particular" suggested their establishment was not the sole true form of the Church. See, "Historical account of the present convocation".



Nottingham's ecclesiastical schemes. The aspersions cast on non-Anglican Protestants were restricted to English dissenters. The pamphleteers attacked the men they were being asked to conciliate, but left those in foreign reformed Churches alone. Even though the Protestants abroad did not adhere to the best ecclesiastical model, they were not vilified as intransigent schismatics, and their opinions were even respectfully quoted to prove the esteem in which the existing English establishment was held throughout the world.<sup>170</sup> The possibility that the anti-comprehensionists might unravel courtly reformation by questioning William's membership of the godly cause was thus not realised. The pamphleteers criticism was highly focused, and left much of the essential fabric of Williamite ideology alone.

Moreover, the anti-comprehensionists adopted parts of their opponents' case. In a curious mirroring of dissenting practice, they absorbed reformation arguments into their own position. They found it particularly convenient to accept the image of William as a faithful guardian and godly governor of the Church. This enabled them to counter the accusation that they were being disloyal to the monarch, and so side-step the potentially damaging accusations of Jacobitism which were levelled by their pro-comprehensionist opponents. Thomas Long, a prebendary of Exeter, pursued exactly this strategy.<sup>171</sup> His principal piece, Vox cleri, used the idea of William's concern for the establishment to suggest that the King would never support alterations which his clergy thought ill-considered. In the preface to his work, Long answered the argument that William clearly wanted concessions, by pointing out that the King had left this issue for Convocation to decide. In the main body of the text, the author reinforced this by interpreting William's statements in support of the Church as royal confidence in the current, unaltered establishment.

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<sup>170</sup> M.M, Letter of the member, p.7; Beveridge, Sermon ... Convocation ... 18th Novemb., p.28; [Long], Vox cleri, p.22, [Willes], Judgement of foreign reformed churches.

<sup>171</sup> Long had been active earlier in 1689 trying to persuade men to swear the oaths to the new monarchs, see [Thomas Long], A full answer to all the popular objections that have yet appear'd for not taking the oath of allegiance to their present Majesties, (London, 1689).

Their Majesties desire may be best known by their living in the Communion of the Church as now established, and his former and late Declarations to favour and protect it; for which the Convocation have addressed their Thanks, and doubt not of it.<sup>172</sup>

Long later used the programme of ecclesiastical improvement contained in the September warrant to further refute the King's supposed encouragement of concession. Responding to the suggestion that comprehension was the "design and intent" of William's policy in calling Convocation, he stated (with somewhat garbled grammar),

First I believe, (whatever may be the design of some Men) is not the intent of the Convocation; they may intend the better Establishment of the present Constitution, the Reformation of the Lives and Manners of some of the Clergy, by new Canons and Censures, to be provided against the Ignorance an Idleness of some, and the Irregularity and scandalous Behaviour of others.<sup>173</sup>

Long's allies similarly employed the reformers' image of the King. Vox laici, an anonymous anti-comprehension pamphlet, cited William's public attachment to the Church to suggest that he opposed the current plot to pull it down.<sup>174</sup> Henry Maurice, a member of Aldrich's Oxford circle, admitted that he had no direct answer to the suggestion that William wanted comprehension, but then asserted a belief in the King's faithful government of the Church, which he thought made such a desire unlikely. He compared William to James I, recalling that the enemies of the establishment in 1603 had hoped that the new monarch would meet their demands, but had been disappointed to discover real royal concern to protect the Church.<sup>175</sup> William Beveridge, whilst preaching extreme caution on comprehension to Convocation, and lauding the current establishment, suggested that the new King had given the Church a chance to rectify any shortcomings.

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<sup>172</sup> [Long], Vox cleri, p.21. Long had used a very similar argument earlier in the year when defending the form and policy of the Church. [Thomas Long], The case of persecution charg'd on the Church of England consider'd and discharg'd in order to her justification and a desired union of Protestant dissenters, (London, 1689), epistle dedicatory.

<sup>173</sup> [Long], Vox cleri, p.55.

<sup>174</sup> Vox laici, p.18.

<sup>175</sup> [Maurice], Remarks from the country, p.18.

Since therefore God has committed such a Church to our care; and since his Vicegerent here has now given us and opportunity to prosecute all things, that may tend to the peace, and advantage of his Church, let us employ all our powers and faculties for its accomplishment.<sup>176</sup>

Even William Jane, whose Letter to a friend, launched the bitter attacks against the courtly reformers, excused the King from complicity in their plans. He stated the royal name was being misused if it was employed in support of comprehension, and hoped that William's calling of Convocation would defeat the schemes of wicked men.

Of course, such language was, at one level, a complete perversion of Williamite rhetoric. It turned an element of court ideology back on its creators to destroy their ecclesiastical policy. Yet, there was a sense in which this appropriation of reformation images was a victory for the propagandists. Their opponents had effectively accepted the reassurances about William's religious attitudes which his spokesmen had built into their case. Anti-comprehensionists had seized on those speeches and documents which the court had so carefully provided to establish the King's concern for the Church. Ultimately, this rendered their arguments much less dangerous. If the reassurance contained in reformation had not saved the preferred ecclesiastical settlement, it had allowed opposition to the proposed concessions to be combined with support for William's kingship. It had avoided Churchmen having to face a regime which appeared completely hostile to their interests, and so reduced the risk of their alienation.

The use anti-comprehensionists could make of Williamite argument opened the way for a more thoroughgoing endorsement once the threat of comprehension had gone. In the 1690s many who had opposed Protestant union joined the courtly reformers in spreading their propaganda. In a sense they had little choice. The dissemination of Williamite rhetoric was so bound up with the Church that anyone who wished to retain a position in the establishment had to become implicated. All Churchmen were required to officiate at fast and thanksgiving services, produce appropriate sermons, read out the royal proclamations against vice, and act on the injunctions and letters raining down from their King, Queen

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<sup>176</sup> Beveridge, Sermon ... Convocation ... 18th Novemb., p.28.



and metropolitan. However, there were also examples of more willing and enthusiastic action from anti-comprehensionists. The reformation case had considerable attractions for these people once it had ceased to be associated with pressure to admit dissenters to the Church. It offered reassurance that ecclesiastical improvements might be made under the new regime; suggested a key role for the clergy in national life; and continued the Churchmen's old concerns with national sin and repentance.

Some of the leaders of the 1689 agitation against comprehension helped William's cause by going to court and adding to the image of the godly royal household. William Beveridge had preached the opening sermon to Convocation and warned that body against unnecessary concessions. Yet he was a court chaplain, and published addresses to the monarchs, adding his considerable spiritual reputation to the Chapel Royal.<sup>177</sup> Others who went to palace pulpits in the 1690s included Bishop Thomas Sprat, who had withdrawn in protest from the Ecclesiastical Commission in 1689; William Jane; and Francis Atterbury, a young Oxford man who, whilst not taking a leading role over comprehension, had rapidly emerged as the star of Dean Aldrich's anti-unionist party.<sup>178</sup> When such men preached after 1689, their message was often indistinguishable from that of Burnet, Tillotson, and their allies. In 1691, William Jane went to the

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<sup>177</sup> Beveridge was appointed chaplain in 1689 after a glittering career. He had collaborated with Anthony Horneck, in establishing the religious societies in London in the late 1670s, and had had considerable publishing success, especially with his Sermon ... common prayer, which had reached its eighth edition by 1687.

In the 1690s he published, William Beveridge, A sermon preached before the Queen at Whitehall October 12 1690, (London, 1690) - reprinted as The Christian's true happiness in 1695.

<sup>178</sup> For Sprat's leaving over the legal basis of the Commission see Edward Cardwell, A history of the conferences and other proceedings connected with the revision of the Book of Common Prayer from the year 1558 to the year 1690, (Oxford, 1840) pp.415-417. For Aldrich and Atterbury see Sutherland and Mitchell, History ... University of Oxford, pp.27-8, 40-3; Bennett, Tory Crisis. The court sermons were, Thomas Sprat, A sermon preached before the King and Queen at Whitehall on Good Friday 1690, (London 1690); Thomas Sprat, A sermon preached before the King and Queen at Whitehall on Good Friday April 6 1694, (London, 1694); Francis Atterbury, A sermon before the Queen at Whitehall May 29 1692, (London 1692); Francis Atterbury, The Christian religion encreased by miracle. A sermon preached before the Queen at Whitehall October 21 1694, (London, 1694); Francis Atterbury, The scorner uncapable of true wisdom. A sermon preached before the Queen at Whitehall, October 28 1694, (London, 1694); William Jane, A sermon preached before the King and Queen at Whitehall, in November 1692, (London, 1693).

pulpit of St. Margaret's Westminster to deliver a thanksgiving sermon. It expounded the fundamental court assumptions.<sup>179</sup> It accepted that the recent past had seen a threat from Catholicism, linked to spreading vice and debauchery. It recognised that William's foreign wars had involved England in a godly struggle with these forces of evil. It acknowledged that moral reformation was essential to this struggle, and that William's military arms abroad must be matched with action for virtue at home.

If irreligion, and infidelity be rife in the earth, if atheism, heresy, and prophaness shall take root among us, and overspread the Land with a content of Virtue, and Religion, 'tis not our Fleets and Armies, our Forts and Garrisons, that can secure us. These are the crying sins, that have heretofore threatened the return of Popery upon this kingdom, and if they are still suffered to continue, and encrease, 'twill be a very hard matter to keep it out.<sup>180</sup>

Jane's concluding passage was a powerful and orthodox expression of Burnet's position. He suggested that personal reformation would secure more than individual salvation. If pursued by the whole population it would unite England around her monarch; earn the blessing of God upon the nation; secure her future; and ultimately "make our Sion to continue a praise in the earth".

A Righteous God will protect, and defend a Righteous people ... nothing but iniquity can be our ruin. What then remains, but that we should resolve this day to pursue those things, which make both for our present, and eternal interest, that we express our gratitude to God, and love to our Country, by a practice suitable to that holy Religion we profess, that our rejoycings, and thanksgivings, may not be the work of one day only, but of our lives. This is the way to shew your selves good Subjects and good Patriots, and such as our really concerned for the good and welfare of your Country.<sup>181</sup>

The case is similar with Bishop Sprat. When he preached at Whitehall on Good Friday, 1690, Sprat was excited by the feeling that these early years of William's reign offered an opportunity for moral

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<sup>179</sup> William Jane, A sermon preached before the honourable House of Commons at St Margaret Westminster, on Thursday, the 26th of November, 1691, being a day of publick thanksgiving, (Oxford, 1691).

<sup>180</sup> Ibid. p.28.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid. p.34.

renewal.<sup>182</sup> Whilst stressing the importance of the established Church in this process, he recognised the court's role in leading the reformation.<sup>183</sup> He told William and Mary that they had been placed at the head of society in order to purge it of sin, and preached:

For You thus indefatigably to copy after this Blessed Example of our Lord Christ, were the certain means for You to prove the greatest Blessings to the whole Nation wherein You live; that is, to become Good, as well as Great Examples to it: You, I mean, whom GOD has placed in so high a rank of Dignity and Honour in this World.<sup>184</sup>

Francis Atterbury too supported the courtly reformation case. His father had greeted the Revolution with an apocalyptic sermon entitled Babylon's downfall.<sup>185</sup> On the 29th May, 1692, the son preached before the Queen. Although this was the day of thanksgiving for the Restoration, Atterbury followed the usual courtly line of using 1660 to strictly Williamite ends. The return of Charles II was not the focus of the sermon, it was merely used as one incident in a pattern of providential history, which had culminated in God's blessings upon England under the present monarchs. Referring to recent military success he stated there had been "fresh instances of mercy and goodness, which God even now had been pleased to bestow on us." Atterbury made his attachment to the court's propaganda clearer when he interpreted these divine blessings as rewards for the court's programme of reformation. In granting victory, God was

Answering at last the many Prayers and Fastings, by which we have besought him so long for the Establishment of Their Majesties Throne, and for the Success of their Arms: and giving us at length an Opportunity of appearing before him, in the more delightful part of our Duty; in the voice of

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<sup>182</sup> Sprat, Sermon ... King and Queen ... Good Friday 1690

<sup>183</sup> The Church played an important role in Sprat's thought, as the necessary instrument for restoring primitive Christianity, see Thomas Sprat, A sermon preached to the natives of the County of Dorset residing in and about the Cities of London and Westminster at St Mary le Bow on Dec. 8, 1692, (London, 1693), p.20-1; Sprat, Discourse ... Lord Bishop of Rochester; Sprat, Sermon... Whitehall on Good Friday April 6 1694.

<sup>184</sup> Sprat, Sermon ... King and Queen ... Good Friday, 1690, p.37-38

<sup>185</sup> Lewis Atterbury, Babylon's downfall, or England's happy deliverance from popery and slavery, being the substance of a sermon preached before the Lord Mayor ... June the 28. 1691, (London, 1691).



in the more delightful part of our Duty; in the voice of  
Praise and Thanksgiving.<sup>186</sup>

Atterbury thus not only asserted William's legitimacy and the benefit the nation received from him, he did so in terms mapped out by the King's own propagandists.

None of this is to say that anti-comprehensionists lapsed into total acquiescence in Williamite arguments. The passionate fear for the Church's safety, which had driven them in 1689, bubbled under the surface, and was stirred by increasing evidence that, whatever the claims of the court, their establishment was not faring well in the 1690s. At the beginning of the decade many talented and experienced clerics had lost their positions in a general ejection of non-juring ministers.<sup>187</sup> By contrast, dissenters seemed to be thriving under the new regime. As has been mentioned, toleration removed the need for non-conformist discretion, and made the size, wealth and influence of their community graphically apparent. At the same time, many of the clergy suffered economically from high land taxes and agricultural depression; whilst a wave of anti-trinitarian and deist writing threatened the triumph of heresy.<sup>188</sup> All this was deeply disturbing to men who, even in 1689, had seen their establishment as a fortress under siege.

In 1696 Francis Atterbury gave these anxieties a voice. His Letter to a Convocation man deplored the state of English religion, and demanded the recall of the Church's legislative body so that the clergy could organise a response to the dangers they faced.<sup>189</sup> The pamphlet signalled a loss of faith in William's episcopacy and their ideology, as it accused the King's ecclesiastical government of failing the moral and spiritual challenges of the decade. The tract complained bitterly about

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<sup>186</sup> Atterbury, Sermon ... Whitehall May 29 1692, (London 1692), p.5.

<sup>187</sup> The best account of the non-juring deprivation is Findon, "The non-jurors".

<sup>188</sup> The two most worrying writers were Stephen Nye, the rector of Little Horstead in Hertfordshire who produced a string of unitarian tracts in the early 1690s, and John Toland, whose Christianity not mysterious, produced a controversial storm in both England and Ireland after its publication in 1695.

<sup>189</sup> [Francis Atterbury], A letter to a Convocation man concerning the rights, powers and privileges of that body, (London, 1697).

the progress of heresy and immorality, and hinted that the monarch had left them unchecked.<sup>190</sup> The demand that Convocation sit whenever Parliament met, implied that William's normal supervision of his Church through his supremacy, and his bishops, was insufficient. It had not upheld the interests of the establishment, and had allowed threats to orthodox religion. Atterbury insisted that William's government of the Church needed an ecclesiastical body to inspire, encourage and supervise it. All this, of course, was a direct challenge to the doctrines of courtly reformation. Atterbury had not only suggested that William's much heralded protection of the Church had proved a sham, he had also expressed deeper doubts about the central claim within royal ideology. He had questioned whether a secular ruler could legitimately lead a moral and religious renewal. As Mark Goldie has shown, Atterbury's thought owed much to an anti-Erastian discourse developed by non-jurors to protest against their deprivation by William. The pamphleteer had followed ejected ministers such as Henry Dodwell in suggesting that ethical and ecclesiastical matters belonged to a different sphere to temporal affairs, and that these two elements of human experience were subject to wholly separate authorities.<sup>191</sup> Whilst secular powers might supervise secular things, Atterbury argued that spiritual matters must be governed by the authority of clerics. This was an extremely dangerous doctrine for William because it threatened to exclude his temporal authority from the very arena of morality and godliness in which its claims to legitimacy had been built.

The courtly reformers responded with an energetic attack upon Atterbury's position. Tenison supervised Wake in a massively learned refutation of the Letter's arguments for the power of Convocation.<sup>192</sup> Burnet joined in.<sup>193</sup> Yet it was too late. Atterbury had caught a popular

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<sup>190</sup> Ibid. especially pp.9-14.

<sup>191</sup> Goldie, "The non-jurors, episcopacy".

<sup>192</sup> William Wake; The authority of Christian princes over their ecclesiastical synods asserted, (London, 1697).

<sup>193</sup> Gilbert Burnet, Reflections on a book entitled [The rights, powers and privileges of an English Convocation], (London, 1700). Burnet by this stage had a personal reason for attacking the Tory Churchmen, as it had become clear they wished to use Convocation to condemn alleged heterodoxies in the Exposition of the thirty nine articles. See Greig,

mood, and a full scale campaign to secure the return of Convocation began to roll.<sup>194</sup> Worse still, this fed into party politics, when leading Tories added it the group's programme at Westminster.<sup>195</sup> Reformation thus ceased to be an ideology around which men of different principles could unite. One of the two parties came to be characterised by an attack upon its logic.

Nevertheless, for the bulk of William's reign the royal rhetoric had held the line. It had brought together diverse strands of English Protestantism, which had formed cores of support for the two opposing parties. Although dissenters and anti-comprehensionist Churchmen had pursued conflicting aims, they had both taken up elements of Williamite propaganda, and so signalled that loyalty to the King was an integral part of their cause. Such mutual appropriation of the court's case does perhaps explain why William was able to work with both Whigs and Tories for most of his time in England, and so avoided becoming a mere faction leader.

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"Thought and polemic", pp.196-7.

<sup>194</sup> A bitter pamphlet campaign erupted around the positions set out by Atterbury and Wake. See Bennett, Tory crisis, pp.50-54; Every, High church party, pp.86-9; G.R.Cragg, Reason and authority in the eighteenth century, (Cambridge, 1964), pp.181-193; G.V.Bennett, White Kennett, 1660-1728, bishop of Peterborough, (London, 1957), pp.36-53.

<sup>195</sup> Bennett, Tory crisis, p.55



## Chapter Six

Courtly reformation and country politics

## I

The pattern of conflict between court and country in the reign of William III was very similar to that between Whigs and Tories. In both instances, a short period of consensus during the Prince of Orange's invasion rapidly collapsed back into divisions reminiscent of Charles II's time, and caused considerable difficulties for the new King.

For court and country, the brief agreement in the winter of 1688 resulted from the almost total estrangement of the political nation from James II's court. In the face of royal policy since 1685, the mistrust of the executive, which had characterised the country position in the 1670s, became very widespread indeed. By his attacks on the Church, James had alienated the traditional supporters of the crown, without attracting any other significant sector of the English elite to his cause.<sup>1</sup> Whilst most of the old opponents of Charles II's ministries had remained unimpressed with the new Catholic monarch; old court stalwarts, such as Danby, Clarendon and Musgrave, began to work against the government, or retired into a bewildered private life.<sup>2</sup> By 1688, disgust had become so general that old distinctions between court and country had been largely dissolved. The wide popularity of William's Declaration, a thoroughgoing country document with its demand for a

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<sup>1</sup> Ogg, England ... James II and William III, chapters 5-7; Jones, Revolution of 1688, chapters 3-6; Miller, James II, chapters 9-12. Some historical works have stressed the support James gained from parts of the dissenting community and from those Whigs who wished to use Tory discomfort to pursue vendettas against them, see J.R.Jones, "James II's Whig collaborators", Historical Journal, 3 (1960), pp.65-72; Mark Goldie, "John Locke's circle and James II", Historical Journal, 35 (1992), pp.557-586; Lacey, Dissent and parliamentary politics, chapter 9. However, all these works stress that these groups were using James for their own purposes, so that their support was always conditional and equivocal.

<sup>2</sup> Danby signed the invitation to William to invade in the summer of 1688, see Browning, English historical documents, pp.120-2; Clarendon's disillusion can be traced in Singer, Correspondence ... Clarendon, vol.2, pp.177-263. For Musgrave under James, see Historical Manuscripts Commission, Report on the manuscripts of S.H.Le Fleming Esq. at Rydal Hall (London, 1890), pp.198-223 - this includes a selection of letters written from Musgrave's seat in Westmoreland revealing his horror at court action.

parliamentary check on court abuses, demonstrated an almost universal willingness to see executive action controlled by an independent agency, and a desire to make the constitutional limitations of monarchical authority explicit.<sup>3</sup>

The dissolution of this consensus began almost as soon as it had crystallised. The breakdown was precipitated by William's attempts to defend the prerogatives of the English crown. As has been shown, the Prince wished to inherit the plenitude of royal power in 1688/9, and worked against attempts to limit it, even when those attempts took their cue from his own manifesto. William thus forced English politicians to choose between two opposed positions at the very moment they had reached broad agreement. The Prince's desire for full authority demanded that peers and MPs decide whether their new ruler could be trusted with the power which their displaced King had so recently abused. On the one hand, it was possible to believe that William's claim to unrestrained authority was acceptable. If it was assumed that the Revolution had swept away the source of executive excess, then it would be appropriate to invest William with all the influence traditionally enjoyed by English monarchs. On the other hand, any doubt that court corruption had been uprooted in 1688 led to the conclusion that it was not safe to leave the royal administration unharnessed. This basic dilemma had begun to divide the English by February 1689, and led to the rapid re-emergence of court and country mentalities. As early as the discussions over the Declaration of Rights, attempts to impose constitutional checks on executive power became controversial.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, in the first days of 1689, parliamentary attempts to sort out the new King's revenue sparked heated exchanges. Some MPs argued against the usual lifetime grant of customs and excise to the monarch. They suggested that such a

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<sup>3</sup> For discussion of the Declaration and its widespread adoption by a wide spectrum of political opinion, see above, chapter one.

<sup>4</sup> When Lord Falkland first proposed a declaration of the constitution, several members expressed concern that this would delay the grant of monarchical power to William. Sergeant Maynard warned against overloading the House, Henry Pollexfen worried that binding the Prince would "tend to confuse" the country, and Sir Richard Temple urged greater dispatch on the central question of filling the throne. See Grey, Debates, vol.9, pp.32, 33-4, 37.

denial would force William into dependence on his legislature, and so guarantee good royal behaviour.<sup>5</sup> Other MPs were horrified by this suggestion. Objecting that not granting the revenue was a churlish way to treat a national deliverer, they sparked a debate between the executive's supporters and opponents which was to rumble on through the decade.<sup>6</sup>

## II

As William's reign progressed, the polarity between trust and suspicion of his government grew more distinct. The process occurred in two broad stages, most neatly divided by the Peace of Ryswick in 1697. Since disputes between court and country before and after this date were characterised by different patterns of politics, it will be convenient to consider the two periods in turn.

The period of the early and mid decade was marked by court/country disputes critics in three broad areas. The first of these was the capacity of Parliament to scrutinise the King's administration. This controversy opened up in 1689, when the Commons launched an investigation into the failure of the Duke of Schomberg's army in Ireland.<sup>7</sup> In the summer and autumn of the William first year, angry MPs demanded to see Privy Council minutes relating to the Irish war, and asked who had recommended a corrupt commissary, John Shales, for his post. The King, supported by his allies in Parliament, refused to provide this information. During a series of bad-tempered exchanges, he claimed that the Commons' requests were an unwarranted trespass on the

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<sup>5</sup> See speeches by Sir Thomas Clarges and Sir Edward Seymour, Grey, Debates, vol.9, pp.123, 125.

<sup>6</sup> See speech by Sir Robert Howard, Grey, Debates, vol.9, p.125-6. The opponents of a lifetime grant were successful in 1689, and William had to wait until 1690 to get a settlement, which granted him the customs revenue for life, excise being given for three years only. The full, complex story is well summarised in W.A.Shaw ed., Calendar of Treasury books, Volume IX, 1689-1691, 5 parts (London, 1931), part 1, pp.xvi-lxxxv.

<sup>7</sup> For an account of the military disasters in Ireland see J.C.Simms, "Schomberg at Dundalk", in J.C.Simms, War and Politics in Ireland 1649-1730 (London, 1986), pp.91-104.



secrets of state, and that they threatened his control of administrative servants.<sup>8</sup>

In the following years, arguments over parliamentary scrutiny continued. Escalating wartime taxation ensured that the Commons did not confine themselves to exposing corrupt bureaucrats, but also demanded the right to regulate public expenditure. In the early 1690s, royal servants found themselves under constant and unprecedented investigation, as the legislature constructed a new system for the examining of government finance. In 1689, demands by MPs for information about the court's monetary needs forced the executive to submit estimates of future expenditure.<sup>9</sup> From 1691, these estimates came to be examined in great depth, as the House used its committee system to subject them to head by head scrutiny.<sup>10</sup> In 1690, the threat of legislative intrusion intensified with the establishment of the Commission for Public Accounts. This body, consisting of a small group of elected MPs, investigated all aspects of public expenditure, and compiled comprehensive, and often hostile, reports on what it

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<sup>8</sup> Investigations into the Irish situation were launched in Commons debates in late May and early June, see Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, pp.31-4; Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, cols. 280-4. Concern came to head on the 27th November when those heading these investigations reported back to the House, *ibid.* vol.5, cols.453-4. The same day, the Commons debated whether to address the King to know who had advised Shales' appointment. Those who successfully advocated the address were opposed by Right Honourable members, who warned of the dangers of rupture with the King, *ibid.* vol.5, cols.458-9. Their words sparked suspicions that they would not present the House's actions in a favourable light when presenting the petition, and so stoked further bitterness between court and country, *ibid.* cols.460-1.

William's refusal to let the Commons see the minutes of the Privy Council's Irish committee in July 1689 is described in Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, p.34.

<sup>9</sup> See W.A.Shaw ed., Calendar ... Treasury books, Volume IX, part 1, cxxviii-cxxix.

The House first asked for estimates on the 24th October, 1689. Journals ... House of Commons, vol.10, p.273. They repeated this request the following year; *ibid.* pp.431-2.

<sup>10</sup> For the Commons' use of committees to investigate government estimates into head by head detail see Horwitz, Luttrell ... Parliamentary diary, pp.7-11, 17-20, 29-33, 51-4 (covering treatment of the army and navy estimates at the start of the 1691/2 session). Such investigations could result in substantial cuts in the governments financial plans - see Journals ... House of Commons, vol.10, pp.552-3.

discovered.<sup>11</sup> In 1694/5, the Commons went still further. With their demand that accounts be produced for the King's civil establishment; and with their instruction to their Commissioners to examine the customs and excise; they cut to the heart of the monarch's private financial business.<sup>12</sup> Naturally, the court resented much of this parliamentary inquisitiveness. In the years before Ryswick, the executive struggled with the legislature, making various attempts to restrain Commons curiosity. Privy Councillors tried to by-pass item by item examination of expenditure in the House; bureaucrats attempted to frustrate the investigations of the Accounts Commission; and, on at least one occasion, a minister denounced investigating MPs as malicious and ignorant.<sup>13</sup>

In the early 1690s, a second area of debate between court and country joined disagreements over parliamentary scrutiny. This was the issue of executive control over the legislature. From 1691, many parliamentarians campaigned to reduce court influence over the membership and actions of the House of Commons. A widespread fear that royal servants might try to emasculate the body which scrutinised their actions led to two legislative proposals designed to reduce this possibility. First, place bills attacked those MPs who risked their independence by taking posts in the King's service.<sup>14</sup> Second, a series

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<sup>11</sup> For the Commission and its unwelcome investigations, see R.A.Downie, "The Commission of Public Accounts and the formation of the country party", English Historical Review, 91 (1976), pp.33-51. The first report of this body, given to the House of Commons in December 1691, is printed in Historical Manuscripts Commission, Manuscripts ... House of Lords 1690-1, pp.356-434.

<sup>12</sup> William Shaw ed, Calendar of treasury books: introduction to volumes XI-XVIII, covering the years 1695-1702, (London, 1934), pp.cxlv-cxlvii.

<sup>13</sup> For attempts to speed through estimates so that Parliament would not scrutinise them, see Sir John Lowther, and Richard Hampden's contributions to the debates on military estimates on the 9th and 19th November, 1691, Horwitz, Parliamentary diary ... Luttrell, pp.10, 29, 31. For bureaucratic frustration of the Accounts Commission, see Downie "The Commission of Public Accounts". On the 3rd December, 1691, Sir John Thompson attacked the Commissioners when they first reported to the House, claiming they did not understand their business, and did not deserve their places. Horwitz, Parliamentary diary ... Luttrell, p.58.

<sup>14</sup> Place bills were introduced in the sessions 1692/3, 1693/4, 1694/5; see Rubini, Court and country, pp.100-103.

of bills to shorten the duration of Parliaments aimed to force members to face their constituents more often, and so guarantee that they would be more dependent on their electorate than the court.<sup>15</sup> Both these types of measure were opposed vigorously. The King and his allies claimed that the proposals would weaken the royal prerogative, and used all available tactics, including the royal veto, to defeat them.<sup>16</sup> Tensions only eased late in 1694, when the King, facing difficult political circumstances, gave way to the Commons' fourth attempt to pass a triennial bill.<sup>17</sup>

The war years witnessed the emergence of a third area of dispute. This was a legal debate about the rights of an English subject when accused of treachery. In the face of continual Jacobite plots, some parliamentarians became concerned that a worried regime might abuse its judicial power. In particular, they began to fear that when men were tried for treason, the desire to convict the King's enemies might override the rights of the accused.<sup>18</sup> Acting on this anxiety, some MPs sponsored measures to regulate treason trials. In repeated sessions they promoted bills to ensure that no-one would be prosecuted for crimes against the state, unless there was watertight evidence against them. Court supporters opposed these measures, believing that they would place the King in danger. They argued against the country members initiative,

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<sup>15</sup> The suggestion that Parliament be shortened was first raised in November 1689, see Historical Manuscripts Commission, Manuscripts ... Lords, 1689-90, pp.343-4. Bills to reduce the length of Parliament were subsequently introduced in the same sessions as place bills, Rubini, Court and country, pp.104-114.

<sup>16</sup> For arguments against the place and triennial bills see the debates on these measures in the 1692/3 Parliament, Horwitz, Parliamentary diary ... Luttrell, pp.335-6, 390-1. The King vetoed a triennial bill in the 1693/4 session, and a place bill the following year.

<sup>17</sup> Rubini, Court and country, pp.113-4.

<sup>18</sup> This was an old fear, which in the 1670s had led to pressure for the Habeas Corpus act, see Thomson, Constitutional history, pp.146-7.



and manoeuvred to defeat it in four successive sessions, before William gave way in 1696.<sup>19</sup>

These tensions were obviously a serious problem for the court. They not only provided another source of distracting political division, they also posed the constant threat of rupture between King and Parliament. With William's administration under so much suspicion, there was a danger that legislators might lose faith in their new monarch. The worst imaginable possibility was that the country mentality might lead to wholesale Jacobitism. Paul Monod has shown that several influential Jacobites had originally supported the Revolution, but had become disillusioned by perceived autocracy and corruption in the Williamite executive.<sup>20</sup> Almost as disturbing was the chance that an organised opposition might form in Parliament. With the menu of suspicions lengthening through the early 1690s, there was a danger that shared mistrust of William might unite a group of politicians prepared to challenge him for control of the Lords or Commons. In such a scenario, the King would have to deal with a disciplined phalanx of men, dedicated to limiting his power, and would have to defeat them before securing the legislation or supply he desired.

At first, this threat was limited by the sporadic nature of country politics. Initially, the various expressions of country sentiment did not form a coordinated programme, and it was very common for legislators to agree with some attacks on the executive, whilst objecting to others.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, those who were suspicious of the court

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<sup>19</sup> Rubini, Court and country, pp.122-6; Hill, Robert Harley, 28, 30-1. A treason act was finally accepted in the winter of 1695/6, but this merely proved the immediate prelude to a bitter clash on the issue of treason in the case of the attainder against Sir John Fenwick. For details of this, see Garrett, Triumphs of providence, pp.250-255.

<sup>20</sup> Paul Monod, "Jacobitism and country principles in the reign of William III", Historical Journal, 30 (1987), pp.289-310. James himself made sporadic attempts to encourage country-minded Englishmen into his camp. See James II, His Majesties most gracious declaration to all his loving subjects ... given 17 April, 1693, (St.Germains, 1693). This promised frequent Parliaments, and legislation to secure fair judicial trails if James was returned to power.

<sup>21</sup> A good example is Sir Charles Sedley, a man who believed passionately that public money was being wasted by corrupt courtiers, and supported attempts to expose this, and who urged passage of a treason act; yet attacked triennial bills as an unwarranted abrogation of the prerogative. See Charles Sedley, Speech of Sir Charles Sidley;

were polarised between Whig and Tory camps. This meant that country alliances in Parliament broke down when partisan issues were discussed; and also meant that co-ordinated attacks on the ministry were difficult, since MPs and peers would not criticise royal servants belonging to their own faction.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, even in the early decade, a degree of political organisation could be perceived through the confusions of country action. A tight-knit group in the Commons, centred on Thomas Clarges, Paul Foley, Robert Harley and Christopher Musgrave, stood behind many of the attempts to scrutinise, criticise and regulate the executive. Despite being divided between Whig and Tory camps, the members of this group were in contact, writing to one another frequently, and meeting through mutual service on the Public Accounts Commission.<sup>23</sup> In the House of Commons their behaviour was sometimes so well choreographed, that there must have been some degree of fore-planning. Not only did these men support each other in their verbal savaging of ministers, they staged ambushes on the administration's control of procedure.<sup>24</sup> Well before 1697, therefore, William faced a

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Charles Sedley, The poetical works of the honourable Sir Charles Sedley, baronet, and his speeches in Parliament (London, 1707), pp.217-9; Horwitz, Parliamentary diary ... Luttrell, pp.25, 32, 52, 55, 61, 75, 113-4, 205. For his opposition to shortening Parliaments; *ibid.* p.390-1.

<sup>22</sup> Henry Horwitz has made much of this evidence in attacking Dennis Rubini's claims to have discovered an organised country party in the early 1690s, see "The structure of parliamentary politics". Also, Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, pp.98, 317.

<sup>23</sup> Correspondence between Foley and Harley, and between Robert Harley and his brother Edward (an MP with similar views) can be traced through Historical Manuscripts Commission, Report ... Portland, vol.3. Many of the letters deal explicitly with parliamentary affairs. This volume also charts contacts with Musgrave, (eg. pp.460, 465), and the growing alliance between Harley and Clarges on the Commission of Public Accounts - see especially p.459. For these relationship see also Brian W.Hill, Robert Harley: Speaker, Secretary of State and premier minister, (New Haven, Conn., 1988), pp.25-8.

<sup>24</sup> A good example came on the 9th November 1691, when Clarges objected to the naval estimates presented to the House by Admiralty Commissioner Richard Onslow. He complained that they were "a great charge" and moved that they be referred to a "particular" committee of the House to be considered in detail. Paul Foley immediately supported Clarges, Horwitz, Parliamentary diary ... Luttrell, pp.7-11. When the committee was set up, over the objections of Treasury Commissioner Sir John Lowther, it was almost certainly chaired and guided by Harley, who reported back to the House on the 14th. Harley proposed economies, and he was supported by Clarges and Foley, *ibid.* pp.17-20.

substantial problem. His propagandists had to cope with a substantial and organised body of opinion, which viewed his executive and servants as potential enemies in a battle for regulated and controlled government.

### III

Courtly reformation was to play an important role in calming suspicion of the executive before the Peace of Ryswick. However, to appreciate this, a much better understanding of the country mentality in the early and mid 1690s is required. Whilst some of the logic behind attacks on the court has been described above, no real attempt has been made to unearth the underlying ideology which motivated these assaults. This intellectual excavation is necessary because without it, it is impossible to assess what purchase courtly reformation might have had upon country politicians. Historians need to know what motivated men to attack William's executive before they can say how official propaganda could have moderated such opposition.

Here, existing historiography has been rather disappointing. Because of an uneven distribution of evidence, most studies of country mentality under William have concentrated on the years after 1697. In this period, parliamentary attacks on the executive were accompanied by vastly more press polemic than had been the case before.<sup>25</sup> Some scholarship, particularly an important article by Colin Brooks, has braved the period before Ryswick, for which there is far less printed material: but the patchiness of the sources, and the fluidity of politics, have prevented such work defining country philosophy too closely.<sup>26</sup> Brooks himself complained that the ideals in which he was interested could not be easily discovered, but had to be "pieced

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<sup>25</sup> For this huge outpouring, see below section V.

Of the major studies of country ideology in late Stuart England David Hayton's articles; Harley biographies; and the works of the Pocock school, have all concentrated upon the writings of the late decade. The consideration given to the country phenomenon in Holmes, British politics in the age of Anne, naturally focuses on the first decade of the eighteenth century.

<sup>26</sup> Brooks, "The country persuasion".



together, or rather distilled".<sup>27</sup> As a result, he could not ascribe a tightly formed ideology to men like Clarges and Foley in the war years. Instead, he outlined a less rigid "country persuasion". Brooks presented this as a set of prejudices and sentiments which influenced political behaviour; but he did not intend it as a rigid set of doctrines or a political programme which would have dictated fixed responses to each situation. Rather the persuasion was a "broad judgement of public affairs"; informed by somewhat vague notions such as pessimism, mistrust, a sense of political responsibility, and a model of England as a federation of gentry estates and localities.<sup>28</sup>

At first sight, Brooks' work suggests that it is impossible to formulate a country ideology before 1697, and so implies that it would be difficult to assess what appeal courtly reformation might have had amongst backbenchers. At second glance, however, the idea of a country "persuasion" looks rather more promising. Whilst it rules out a clearly-defined political philosophy amongst Clarges, Harley, and their allies, it does suggest that there were less systematic habits of thought which united parliamentarians in their attacks on the court. If the evidence from the early 1690s is reviewed with this in mind, it becomes easier to discover aspects of country politics on which Williamite rhetoric might have worked. Whilst courtly reformation cannot be set up against a well-articulated and coherent anti-court position, careful attention to the pattern of criticism does reveal two broad concerns amongst the suspicious MPs which Burnet and his colleagues could address and turn to William's advantage.

First, it is clear that Clarges and his allies were motivated by a heightened moral sense. Their attempts to restrain the court were rooted in a deep concern about vice, which shaped both their analysis of England's ills and their proposed solutions. David Hayton has pioneered work on this moral sense with his study of MPs in the 1690s.<sup>29</sup> Looking at the personal histories of Members of Parliament, Hayton noted a

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid. p.139.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. pp.136-144.

<sup>29</sup> David Hayton, "Moral reform and country politics"

remarkable correlation between interest in restraining the court, and desire for moral reformation. He showed that those who supported attacks on court power were extremely likely to be involved in contemporary movements to amend the nation's manners. Hayton suggested a possible reason for this link. He argued that there was a natural affinity between the two enthusiasms, since the usual contemporary explanation of abuses at court was moral failing amongst courtiers. Since it was the greed, dishonesty and ambition of the King's servants which led to miscarriages of government, moral reformation and restraint of the executive had to be pursued in tandem.<sup>30</sup>

Most of Hayton's evidence was drawn from the last years of William's reign, but the connection between moralism and parliamentary control also operated during the war.<sup>31</sup> In the early 1690s the controlling figure in backbench rhetoric was the debauched courtier. When MPs analyzed the danger from the executive, they pitched upon vicious individuals, "knaves and villains" who, they assumed, infested the King's service.<sup>32</sup> This attitude ran through all the country campaigns. Particularly, investigation into government finance was driven by the conviction that the heavy demand for taxes, and the growing national debt, were caused by the dishonesty and financial greed of evil courtiers. "We are told that still there is a vast debt behind" said Sir Francis Winnington in 1693, "but there are vast pensions and gifts".<sup>33</sup> "The money is not all spent," complained William Garroway when speaking in 1689 of army supply "I think it may be embezzled".<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid. pp.83-7.

<sup>31</sup> Hayton's survey of MPs and their activities in "Moral reform and country politics" spanned the years 1692-99. However the bulk of his evidence for the mental connection between immorality and political corruption at court was drawn from the rhetoric of Harley's campaigns after 1697, especially from the "paper war" of 1698-1701.

<sup>32</sup> The quote is from the speech by John Smith on the Irish miscarriages on the 26th November, 1689, Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, col.455.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. col.794 - debate on the size of the land army, 5th December 1693.

<sup>34</sup> Grey, Debates, vol.9, p.389 - debate in Grand Committee on supply, 2nd November, 1689.

"Certainly there has been mismanagement", said Clarges in 1690 when demanding proper financial accounts, "It is the common talk of the town".

Men cannot know these things by inspiration - Land and Tide-Waiters brag what they can smuggle and cheat - Farmers were Managers, but after they had made up their own pack, they cared not what became of the rest.<sup>35</sup>

Similarly, attempts to reduce executive control over the legislature were sparked by moral considerations. In promoting place and triennial bills, MPs were at least as much exercised by the influence of individual debauchees, as worried by the executive's power as an impersonal institution. Although arguments for these measures could be made using constitutional language, this rhetoric was usually underpinned by another discourse, expressing disgust at the vice of ministers and courtiers. For example, in a debate of the 28th February, 1693, on a triennial bill, much appeal was made to the idea that frequent Parliaments were guaranteed by England's existing laws.<sup>36</sup> Yet the bill was also promoted by suggesting that a long Parliament corrupted politicians' virtue. They made a Commons seat a valuable prize, and encouraged corrupt courtiers to try to debauch members. The longer the House sat, the more it entered into an immoral economy of bribery and greed, which vicious officials would dominate. Robert Harley contended that the bill was for the Commons "honour", whilst Foley opined

It is necessary for us to have frequent parliaments, and to take care also that parliaments be not corrupted, which frequent and fresh are less subject to.<sup>37</sup>

After hearing that bribes had become ubiquitous in previous long Parliaments, one backbencher explained, "When men continue here long they alter".<sup>38</sup> The language supporting place bills echoed these themes.

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid. vol.10, p.27 - debate on supply, 31st March 1690.

<sup>36</sup> In the debate, different members stated that "the Bill of Rights would have frequent Parliaments", that "annual Parliaments have been erected by several statutes" - Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, col.760 - and that the "language of the bill is the same with the ancient former laws for annual Parliaments" - ibid. col.761.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. col.761.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. col.760.



MPs on the government's payroll were held to have lost their independence, and so to threaten the proper constitutional balance between court and Commons. Yet they were also attacked as potentially immoral. As courtiers, who voted supply, they were seen as having an opportunity to increase the funds which they could embezzle, and lavish away on their lusts. Sir Charles Sedley once explained that

the King and the People always have the same Interest, and it is not the King's to take one Penny more from the People than will just carry on the Government; it is the People's Interest to give him full as much: But it is the Courtiers Interest to get all they can for him here, that they may obtain their Request more easily at Whitehall.<sup>39</sup>

Given half a chance, such men would defraud the King of his income and "devour" his revenue.<sup>40</sup>

If the country position rested on moralism in the early 1690s, it was also shaped by political memory. As Colin Brooks has pointed out, many of the men who tried to restrain the executive had had long public careers, and the attitudes of all of them had been influenced by the record of preceding reigns.<sup>41</sup> If not every country politician in the 1690s had been a persistent critic of the Caroline and Jacobean courts, the mounting evidence of abuse before 1688 had united all in the belief that they had witnessed the corruption of English government. Most had been vigorously anti-Catholic in the decades before the Revolution, and had come to fear that a popishly-affected court was the entry point for debauchery and arbitrary principles.<sup>42</sup> MPs after the Revolution felt

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<sup>39</sup> Sedley, Poetical works, p.217.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. pp.218-9. These accusations are contained in two undated speeches, the first on revenue officers, the second on ways and means. Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, cols.745-7 places them in December 1692.

<sup>41</sup> Brooks, "Country persuasion", p.137.

<sup>42</sup> Despite their division between Whigs and Tories, most of the leading country politicians of the 1690s had shared a concern that the nation was under threat from a highly placed popish conspiracy. For the widespread fear of popish subversion in the Restoration period see John Miller, Popery and politics in England, 1660-1688, (Cambridge, 1973). For spread of such fears across the political spectrum at particular moments see, J.P.Kenyon, The popish plot, (London, 1972) and Jonathan Scott, Algernon Sidney ... crisis. Under Charles, many future country spokesmen had served on parliamentary committees to limit popish influence. Some had supported the court in the 1670s and early 1680s, but had done so because they felt the royal family and parts of the

they had seen the luxury and extravagance of Charles' administration lead into the naked ambition of his brother's. It was, therefore inevitable that suspicion of William's executive would be shaped by the experience of what had happened before he arrived.

In the early and mid 1690s, this political memory revealed itself in almost every aspect of anti-court rhetoric. Limitations on William were usually presented as attempts to prevent a repetition of what had happened before. Backbench language was soaked in recent historical allusion, with the mistakes of the past used as justification for parliamentary assertiveness now. This came out most clearly in the 1689-90 debates on the revenue. The chief reason given for forcing William to meet Parliament by denying him a lifetime grant, was that permanent awards of customs and excise were believed to have caused the problems of the Restoration. A fortnight after William had gained the crown Clarges stated "I think we ought to be cautious of the revenue, which is the life of the government, and consider the two last reigns."<sup>43</sup> He was supported by Sir Edward Seymour who suggested

What you settle on the Crown, I would have so well done as to support the Crown, and not carry it to excess. We may date out misery from our bounty here. If King Charles II had not had that bounty from you, he had never attempted what he had done.<sup>44</sup>

This remained the basis of MPs logic into the revenue debates of the following year. In 1690, Seymour repeated his argument, stating: "We are told of former Kings who had this revenue, that from such easy concessions came our miseries."<sup>45</sup> Similarly, horror stories from the

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administration were still uncorrupted by a popish conspiracy whose existence they accepted, and because they feared that too much opposition would divide the virtuous forces of Protestantism. For the careers of leading country spokesmen of the 1690s before the Revolution; see Basil Duke Henning ed., The history of Parliament: the House of Commons, 1660-1690, 3 vols (London, 1983), vol.2, pp.24-81 (Sir Thomas Clarges); pp.336-8, (Paul Foley); pp.494-497 (Robert Harley's father, Sir Edward); vol.3, pp.116-120 (Sir Christopher Musgrave); pp.553-4 (Sir John Thompson); pp.745-8 (Sir Francis Winnington).

<sup>43</sup> Grey, Debates, vol.9, p.123 - Debate on settling the revenue, 27th February 1689.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid. p.125.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. vol.10, p.13-14 - debate on settling the revenue in Grand Committee on supply, 27th March, 1690.

past were used to press for triennial and place legislation. Tales of Charles II and his "pensioner" Parliament were endlessly retold to prove the dangers of inaction.<sup>46</sup>

The backbenchers historical sense was also revealed in the assumption that any shortcoming in William's government must be, in some sense, a survival from Charles and James' days. The Restoration court had become such a paradigm of corruption, that it seems to have been difficult for Clarges and his allies to imagine abuses unconnected with it. The corrupt methods of contemporary courtiers were usually traced back to the 1670s and 1680s, so that the charge against William's executive became the perpetuation of old evils rather than the invention of new. For instance, the first report of the Commission for Public Accounts set many of the abuses it described in a historical context. As it berated the army for enlarging the number of commissions, so that more officers lived off the service without any increase in military strength, it observed

the first enlarging of Establishments, as to numbers and pay, began in the time of the Lord Clifford's Ministry, and was augmented in the reign of the late King James.<sup>47</sup>

The Commission also complained that money was repaid to dishonest creditors of the pre-Revolution government; and highlighted the excessive pensions, gifts and payments which were lost to James' dismissed servants.<sup>48</sup>

From tracing this survival of corrupt methods, it was a short step to imagining the survival of corrupt persons. Miscarriages under William were often attributed to debauched officials of the preceding regime who had not been purged in 1688. One of the charges brought against John

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<sup>46</sup> See contributions, especially that of Sir Francis Winnington, to the triennial debate on the 28th June, 1693, Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, cols.759-62. Also the contributions, especially Foley's, to a debate on the same measure on the 9th February, *ibid.* cols.766-7; and Musgrave's speech on a triennial bill on the 18th December 1693, *ibid.* col.821.

<sup>47</sup> Historical Manuscripts Commission, Manuscripts ... Lords 1690-1, p.407.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* pp.408-9, 420-2, 425-8.



Shales in 1689 was that he had worked for James II.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, Clarges suggested in 1693 that national misfortune stemmed from those "arraigned in former times, now in offices"; whilst in 1691 Sedley portrayed William as surrounded by a band of established fraudsters who had learnt their trade before he arrived.

He's a Wise and Virtuous Prince, but he is but a Young King, encompassed and hemm'd in among a Company of Crafty old Courtiers, to say no more of them, with Places, some of three thousand, some of six and some eleven thousand.<sup>50</sup>

Of course, it is important to be wary of presenting all attacks on government personnel as examples of country sentiment. The most obvious reason for caution is that partisan rivalry, the hatred between Whigs and Tories, could adopt anti-executive rhetoric when these parties were trying to dislodge one another from office. The year 1695, for instance, saw the publication of proceedings in Parliament against a number of officials caught misappropriating money and accepting bribes. The Commons debates were printed in pamphlet form, along with a preface explaining the need to guard against public corruption.<sup>51</sup> However, whilst this work reported the activities of the Commissioners for Public Accounts, it did not originate from Harley and Clarges' circle. Rather, it sprang from a group of militant Whigs, who wished to use the parliamentary inquiry to blacken the Toryism of its chief targets.<sup>52</sup> Other pamphlets and speeches also used country language as cover for partisan attacks.<sup>53</sup> Yet although such rhetoric had party motives, and so

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<sup>49</sup> The parliamentary address complained that Shales had been appointed "notwithstanding he was notoriously known to ... have served the late King James as his commissary" Journals ... House of Commons, vol.10, p.298.

<sup>50</sup> Sedley, Speech of Sir Charles Sidley; Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, col.776 - Clarges contribution to the debate on the King's speech, 13th November, 1693.

<sup>51</sup> A collection of the debates and proceedings in Parliament in 1694 and 1695 upon the inquiry into the late briberies and corrupt practices, (London, 1695).

<sup>52</sup> See Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, pp.146-152.

<sup>53</sup> In the early 1690s Whigs especially used this device, accusing Tories, as the old court party, of being addicted to the court life. See Plain English: or an inquiry into the causes that have frustrated our expectations from the late happy Revolution, (London, 1691); [John Hampden], Some short considerations about the most proper way of raising

cannot be used as direct evidence of country attitudes, it still illuminates the backbenchers' political memory. As they tried to pick up support from MPs for their sallies, Whigs and Tories accused their victims of having co-operated with pre-Revolution governments. In 1689, John Howe dressed his attack on Tory ministers as an attack on men who had served in James' Privy Council, using their connection with the old regime as proof of their dishonesty.<sup>54</sup> The 1695 pamphlet on bribery similarly attacked Tories as relics of a past dark age. Its preface warned

It is yet fresh in Memory, how our own Nation was brought to the very Brink of Destruction by the corrupt Practices of the Reign of Charles the Second. Then was the time when all Men of Vertue, untainted Probity, and Love to their Country ran the Hazard of being ruin'd.<sup>55</sup>

Tories replied by accusing leading Whigs of being just as implicated in the mire of the Restoration regime. In 1695 they defended their men by pointing out their accusers were supported by the Earl of Sunderland, the great unprincipled courtier of James' reign.<sup>56</sup> Both sides, therefore, knew that there was political capital to be made amongst backbenchers by associating enemies with the terrible memory of what had gone before.

#### IV

Having outlined the moralism and historical sense of the country worldview before Ryswick, it is possible to show how courtly reformation placated the government's critics. Once suspicion of government after

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money in the present conjuncture, (London, 1691); [John Hampden], Some short considerations concerning the state of the nation, [1692]; An honest commoners speech, (London, 1694).

<sup>54</sup> Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, col.281 - debate on delay of relief to Ireland, 1st June, 1689. Howe said "if we be delivered to these men, who formerly gave the ill counsel, and were of the privy-council to King James, they are not fit to be counsellors to King William."

<sup>55</sup> Collection of the debates, preface p.iii.

<sup>56</sup> A letter from a gentleman in Yorkshire, to his countryman in London, concerning the Duke of Leeds, with an answer, (London, 1695), pp.32-3. For Sunderland's career, see, J.P.Kenyon, Robert Spencer, Earl of Sunderland, 1641-1702, (London, 1958).

the Revolution is understood as an amalgam of ethical righteousness, and vivid political memory, a parallel begins to emerge between the assumptions of country politicians and those of Williamite propagandists. Since men like Clarges and Harley saw personal debauchery as the root of public abuse, and since they viewed the Restoration court as the root of all evil, their rhetoric effectively echoed the denunciation of past sin which dominated courtly reformation. Both country politicians, and the new government, claimed to want to eradicate debauchery which had become ensconced during the late reigns. As a result, William's propagandists were given a chance to neutralise attacks upon the executive. If they took their usual line, and stressed the court's lead in eliminating the sins of the Restoration, they might hope to persuade men like Harley and Clarges into collaboration and consensus.

The appeal of Williamite moral reform to the country mentality was evident amongst some of the most active critics of the administration. In the 1690s, some of those most suspicious of the executive also became ardent advocates of the courtly reformation programme. The degree to which this occurred can be illustrated by the case of Robert Harley and Paul Foley. These two country stalwarts belonged to a intimate political connection, based on their two families, which left considerable evidence of its beliefs in the large number of letters which passed between clan members.<sup>57</sup> In this correspondence, mistrust of William's executive was matched by a belief in the King's providential role as a reformer, and enthusiasm for the moral crusade he launched. The two families were sufficiently convinced by the royal message of reformation, that they were prepared to help broadcast it, both within their homelands on the Welsh borders, and nationally. In February 1689, they organised the thanksgiving for William's intervention in their locality. They thus helped to drive home the idea that England had been delivered from debauching rulers and that the new monarch was an arm of

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<sup>57</sup> For the consolidation of this connection, see Hill, Robert Harley, chapter 1; Angus McInnes, Robert Harley, puritan politician, (London, 1970), chapter 1. For the earlier history of the Harleys see Jacqueline Eales, Puritans and roundheads: the Harleys of Brampton Bryant and the outbreak of the English Civil War, (Cambridge, 1990).



the Lord. Robert Harley reported to his father, Sir Edward, that the day had been "solemnly observed here with a very great congregation and very excellent sermon".<sup>58</sup> Later, the Harleys and Foleys gave enthusiastic support to the first concrete manifestation courtly reformation, the attempt to renew the Church as an instrument of godly righteousness. They campaigned for candidates for the 1689 Convocation who would back Nottingham's ecclesiastical programme, and were bitterly disappointed that the Earl's opponents triumphed in that body. "We may as soon expect reformation from a convention of infernal spirits as from any of these" wrote Robert's brother, Edward.<sup>59</sup> In the years that followed, the connection also weighed in behind Queen Mary's attempts to reform manners through the law; and aided William's programme of national humiliation through fast days.<sup>60</sup> When a new day of repentance was announced, London-based members of the families rushed the news out to Herefordshire, so that the neighbourhood could be prepared.<sup>61</sup> Most significantly, support for reformation within the families' circles was explicitly recognised as a form of support for the new court. When John Boscowen wrote to Robert Harley on the 27th September, 1690, telling him of the success of fasting in London, he congratulated his friend on holding his locality to the linked causes of reform and the King.

I am glad your country is so firm to the Government when others deviate.

The King declared yesterday his intension was the fast should be observed while the war continued in Ireland. The London and adjacent ministers neglected it the last day without an order from his Majesty on pretence that it was 'outed' by the Thanksgiving.<sup>62</sup>

At first glance, it is harder to demonstrate the commitment of other country leaders to William's moral and religious programme. There

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<sup>58</sup> Historical Manuscripts Commission, Report ... Portland, vol.3 p.428.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid. p.441.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid. pp.470-1, 482-3, 485, 487. The Harleys wrote of moves by the bishops to draught proclamations against vice, the progress of the reformation campaign, and of concern at victimisation of the reformation societies' informers.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid. p.462 - Letter of 11th April 1691.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid. p.450.

is a particular problem with Tories such as Clarges and Musgrave, since these men helped to wreck Nottingham's ecclesiastical plans in 1689, and so scotched William's early hopes for Church-led reformation. However, as has been shown, opposition to Williamite schemes for Protestant union ought not to be read as hostility to the whole idea of royal reform.<sup>63</sup> Musgrave was active in the movement for reformation of manners, and there are glimpses in Clarges' political rhetoric that he believed England had been delivered to a truly virtuous monarch in 1688.<sup>64</sup>

Consensus over moral reform was, of course, useful to William. It meant that in one area of policy, at least, the King was viewed as a friend by his fiercest critics. Yet courtly reformation did more than construct a narrow alliance between country members and the executive on the specific issue of moral reform. It also operated in some of the more controversial debates which divided the crown from its subjects. Since Williamite propaganda paralleled the assumptions of the country members, the regime's defenders could use it to deflect and manage criticism. Because official rhetoric shared MPs' horror of Restoration debauchery, William's spokesmen could construct his executive as a sort of "country court". They could point out that a government founded on the principles outlined by Burnet actually shared many of the same concerns, and recognised the same enemies, as its backbench critics.<sup>65</sup> The reformers

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<sup>63</sup> See above, pp.227-233.

<sup>64</sup> For Musgrave's interest in moral reform, see Hayton, "Moral reform", p.90.

Behind Clarges attacks on the government in the 1690s, there are signs of a man who recognised 1688 as a glorious event. In December 1689 he argued for a large settlement on the Prince and Princess of Denmark, for he thought "it is just and honourable to their merits, who forsook all their pomp, father and mother, for our laws and liberties" - Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol. 5 Col.494. An early speech in February 1689 did ask Parliament not to be over-generous to the new government, but it showed faith in William's virtue and integrity by declaring "It seems, by the King's declaration that we are out of danger of falling into the misfortunes of the last two governments." - Grey, Debates, vol.9, p.123. Later Clarges was prepared to congratulate his King on military success in Ireland, and to warn the Commons not to raise "such a heap of difficulties" that it would be impossible for William to rescue the British Isles from the Catholic threat. Horwitz, Parliamentary diary ... Luttrell, p.215; Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, col.624.

<sup>65</sup> For one example, see Tension, Sermon against self love, pp.10-11 which blasted corrupt administrators who milked public funds.

could thus hold up the King as an exponent of country principles, who wanted to rid his administration of its inherited debauchery, and who would welcome the help and encouragement of country members in this task. Using this technique, the royal propagandists could hope to corral potential criticism into relatively safe areas. They could try to persuade parliamentarians that any divisions between them and the court stemmed, not from ideological incompatibility, but merely from the practical problems of getting a programme of reform past a powerful and entrenched system of corruption.<sup>66</sup>

Courtly reformation was most successfully applied to calm country fears in the discussions over parliamentary scrutiny of public finance. Although the court sometimes took a stand on its prerogative when faced with demands to investigate its expenditure, blank opposition was not its only response. More usually, it employed the ideal of a purging King to try to channel backbench energies. The starting point for the strategy was the image of the court contained in reformation propaganda. It has been repeatedly stressed that the new monarchs were presented as a source of piety and virtue in contrast to the debauched excesses of the Restoration regimes. What must be emphasised here is that royal frugality formed a central part of this picture. William and Mary were portrayed as careful and honest husbands of government funds, who had broken with the financial extravagance and waste of Charles and James. For instance, Burnet and his allies made much of the Queen's lead in restraining unnecessary expenditure at court; whilst the King was shown to prefer the hardships of the military camp to the costly ease of palaces.<sup>67</sup> Most importantly, royal propagandists defended this image of

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<sup>66</sup> The analysis offered here is contrary to Shelley Burtt's recent assertion that it was impossible for any English court to take up a country programme, because the interests and ideals of the two sides were so opposed. See Burtt, Virtue transformed, p.25.

<sup>67</sup> Edward Fowler's eulogy for Mary spoke of her limited spending on clothes, and of her palate being so restrained "she could live in a dairy". Burnet's said she had "no inclinations ... to any diversions that were expenceful", and hoped her expenditure on her houses and gardens would be forgiven. Fowler, Discourse of the great disingenuity, preface p.12; Burnet, Essay ... late Queen, p.82. Contemporary opinion of William was that, if anything, he spent too little on outward display, and was miserly with court hospitality. Burnet, History ... own times, vol.4, pp.2-3.



frugality in the face of the government's escalating requests for funds. They admitted that taxes had risen, but argued that this was solely due to the demands of war. Williamite pamphleteers pointed out that the King spent his money on necessary arms and fighting men, and did not dissipate them in courtly extravagance as his predecessors had done.<sup>68</sup> One writer asserted that men were now "satisfied that their money is employed for the uses intended, not lavishly and unaccountably thrown away on pensions, &c.", and another stated,

What we give his Majesty, he bestows ... in providing for our defence, not for his own pleasure or humour: He is none of those that are bewitched with the Charms of an opulent Fortune, or dazzled with the Lustre of a Crown, and thereupon fall to Luxury and glorious Ease, and progress their Kingdoms round for an expensive Recreation. He delights not in stately and sumptuous Palaces, nor consumes his Revenues in erecting or adorning such.<sup>69</sup>

Spokesmen for the Treasury in Parliament joined in this presentation, offering panegyrics on William's careful use of money. For instance, Sir George Treby, trying to head off doubts about the court's financial demands in the Commons late in 1689, reminded members that there had been a change in English government.

I have seen a time, when those who cheated the King were thought the best men. The Money we are to pay now is our Redemption-Money; for what we paid to beat our Enemies formerly, was spent upon dissolute persons at Court.<sup>70</sup>

Here, court spokesmen were not simply elaborating their picture of a virtuous monarch. They were also developing the ideal of a "country court". By incorporating frugality and fiscal probity into the royal programme of reformation, the court could signal that it recognised backbench anxiety about financial mismanagement, and that it was taking action to settle their fears. When asking for money from Parliament, the

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<sup>68</sup> Interestingly, a forthcoming Cambridge thesis by Andrew Barclay will demonstrate that James was, in reality, an extremely tight manager of court expenditure, and that 1688 actually saw a relaxation in this area.

<sup>69</sup> The character of a bigotted prince; and what England may expect from the return of such a one, (London, 1691), p.19; Short reflections upon the state of affairs in England: more especially, with relation to the taxes and contributions now necessary, (London, 1691), pp.24-5.

<sup>70</sup> Grey, Debates, vol.9, p.393.

King usually accompanied his request with a pledge that any supply granted would not be misdirected. This tacitly acknowledged that past experience had given parliamentarians legitimate cause for concern, and promised that things would be different under the new reforming government. As early as the 8th March 1688/9, William, recommending that troops be sent for the reduction of Ireland, stated, "I will engage my solemn word to you that whatever you shall give in order to these public ends shall be strictly applied to them".<sup>71</sup> Opening the 1690-1 session of Parliament, he assured the House "I have asked no revenue for myself, but what I have readily subjected to be charged to the uses of the war."<sup>72</sup> In his address to Parliament on the 25th November 1690, William reinforced this message, saying of the supplies the Commons was considering approving, "I shall not be wanting on my part, to see them exactly applied to those uses for which you intend them."<sup>73</sup>

This ideal of a frugal court, struggling to overcome the corrupt legacy of the past, opened the way for attempts to neutralise hostility from backbenchers. Since courtly reformation suggested monarch and legislators shared the same objectives, it permitted the executive to offer even the most suspicious MPs a role in the government's own programme of fiscal reform. Those concerned about possible waste and misappropriation within the administration might be recruited as constructive critics: men who would help the King by delving into his bureaucracy and unearthing any surviving corruption.

William, therefore, welcomed much parliamentary enquiry. Although there were tensions between court and legislature over scrutiny in the early 1690s, this should not detract attention from repeated offers made by the King to open up the inner secrets of his administration. Above, the system of financial scrutiny which emerged in the early 1690s was described as a response to legislative fears about the costs of government. However, whilst backbench pressure to investigate public finance was responsible for much of the new mechanism, the court itself

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<sup>71</sup> Journals ... House of Commons, vol.10, p.45

<sup>72</sup> Ibid. vol. 10 p.425.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid. pp.482.

also took a lead. On its own initiative, it prepared public accounts, provided estimates, and gave access to the internal workings of its bureaucracy.<sup>74</sup> On the 28th June, 1689, the King, warning that not enough had yet been granted to cover the cost of war, suggested that Parliament might like to check how money was being spent in order to satisfy themselves that his need was genuine.

The necessary Expence of this Year will much exceed the sums you have yet provided for it. And, that you may make the truer judgment in that Matter, I am very willing you should see how all the Monies have been hitherto laid out: And to that End I have commanded those Accounts be speedily brought to you: By which you will see how very little of the Revenue has been applied to any other Use, than that of the Navy and Land forces.<sup>75</sup>

Despite the fact that the Commons did not respond to this offer, William persisted. Opening Parliament in October he stated,

That you may be satisfied how the Money has been laid out which you have already given, I have directed the accounts to be laid before you, when you think fit to call for them.<sup>76</sup>

This time the House took up the royal initiative and called for the accounts, which were presented on the 1st November.<sup>77</sup> Next year the King repeated his performance, again offering the Commons access to the hidden operations of his administration. Returning to Westminster from Ireland for the winter session, he told his legislators,

I did, at my Departure, give order for all the publick Accompts to be made ready for Me against My Return, and I have commanded them to be laid before the House of Commons.<sup>78</sup>

William was willing to allow scrutiny even when parliamentarians took the initiative. As was mentioned above, the practice of providing estimates for future expenditure originated in Commons demands for

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<sup>74</sup> William's own offers of scrutiny and efficiency do something to undermine John Brewer's recent contention that lean and rational government in England resulted from the conflict of court and country. Brewer, Sinews of power, chapter 5.

<sup>75</sup> Journals ... House of Commons, vol.10, p.200.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid. vol.10. p.271.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid. vol.10, p.278.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid. vol.10, p.425.



information in 1689. Yet even though these requests were a novel intrusion into the mysteries of state, they were readily accepted by the court. On William's orders, his ministers responded with detailed "states" of the army, navy and ordnance, which, in 1691, became the basis for Parliament's first systematic review of spending plans.<sup>79</sup> Even when the Commons asked for accounts from the King's civil administration in 1694/5, financial openness was maintained. William provided the required information quickly and efficiently, and accepted a series of Commons resolutions controlling what he did with his own money - even though their position in law was dubious.<sup>80</sup>

Scrutiny was even encouraged through the Commission for Public Accounts. Despite the anger amongst some court politicians about the activities of this body, William's executive was not initially, or ever absolutely, hostile to it. Such a Commission was, after all, a logical development at a time when the court had started to provide accounts, and would fit with the wider policy of trying to work with parliamentary investigators. Accordingly, William gave the Commission much support. The idea for a body to investigate public accounts was first floated in the early months of 1690, when a bill was introduced to the Commons to empanel nine MPs.<sup>81</sup> Although this bill was lost at an adjournment in May, there is no evidence that William was hostile to the measure; and Burnet was later to claim that the whole scheme had been a royal initiative.<sup>82</sup> Burnet's view appears to be confirmed by events in the summer, when the King moved to rescue the Commission. William attempted to establish a body on his own authority, which would have had the same

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<sup>79</sup> On the 1st November, 1689, estimates for the army, navy and ordnance were presented by the Earl of Ranelagh (Paymaster of the Army), Sir Thomas Lee, and Sir Thomas Goodrick, (Lieutenant-General of the Ordnance) respectively. Journals ... House of Commons, vol.10, p.278. Similar presentations next year produced a detailed list of the numbers and pay of each regiment in the army, as well as estimates for the navy and ordnance, *ibid.* vol.10, pp.431-432. The King readily responded to Commons calls for estimates in 1691/2.

<sup>80</sup> Shaw, Calendar of treasury books: introduction to volumes XI-XVIII, pp.cxlvii-cxliii.

<sup>81</sup> For the empanelling process over the period 19th-22nd May, 1690; see Journals ... House of Commons, vol.10, pp.421-22.

<sup>82</sup> Burnet, History ... own time, vol.4, pp.116-7.

functions, and the same membership as that envisaged in the spring proposals. This royal design to establish an inquisition on finance was only frustrated by a factional dispute between Whigs and Tories.<sup>83</sup> When Parliament met again in October, court politicians again appear to have offered no resistance to the re-introduced bill, and William gave the measure his assent that winter.<sup>84</sup>

It is true, as J.A.Downie has shown, that the Commission's inquiries were systematically frustrated by certain ministers and bureaucrats once the body got down to work.<sup>85</sup> Yet again, this was not the full picture. It is curious how much help the Commissioners obtained from the court in compiling their hostile criticisms. As Harley and his team laboured through 1691, the executive fulfilled its statutory duty to pay them, and to meet all their expenses; and it ordered its officers to co-operate in their work.<sup>86</sup> To take one example: at the end of June, 1691, Viscount Sidney, the Secretary of State, wrote to the Earl of Suffolk to warn against any attempts to frustrate the Commissioners' enquiries into the cost of Dutch forces in England. Suffolk was told to muster his soldiers so he could inform the Commission how many he had, and was ordered to admit any person that body sent to witness the event.<sup>87</sup> Even after the first report was published, William still saw advantages in approving parliamentary scrutineers. Robert Harley,

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<sup>83</sup> Calendar of state papers domestic 1690-1, p.29; Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, p.59.

<sup>84</sup> The bill passed the Commons on the 26th December, 1690; Journals ... House of Commons, vol.10, p.538 - and received the royal assent under two weeks later Journals ... House of Lords, vol.14, p.618.

<sup>85</sup> Downie, "Commission of public accounts".

<sup>86</sup> For the statutory payments see Shaw ed., Calendar ... Treasury books, Volume XI, part 3, pp.1080, 1149, 1151 - royal warrants for payment of stipends to Commissioners, and to cover the expense of clerks, messengers and "other necessary charges", up to a sum of two thousand pounds.

<sup>87</sup> Calendar of state papers domestic, 1690-91, p.428 - Sidney to Suffolk, 29th June, 1691.

the rising star of the Commission, reported in 1692 that the King had received him and his colleagues graciously and thanked them for their efforts.<sup>88</sup>

All this court effort gained a satisfying response. During the various campaigns of enquiry, country MPs avoided direct opposition to the court by taking up the offer of alliance. They were always careful to place their activities in the context of the royal programme of reform. They presented themselves, not as wrathful and hostile avengers of the court's transgressions, but as exposers of administrative corruption which the King's own efforts had not yet succeeded in purging. This attitude was visible in the debates over access to Privy Council deliberations in 1689. In the Shales case, those MPs who requested information suggested that William was surrounded by debauchees from the last reign, and presented their demands as an attempt to remove these dangerous men.<sup>93</sup> More sustained evidence that country MPs became recruits for a royal programme of purgation came from the Commission of Public Accounts. Just as it is important not to overplay the hostility of the court to its parliamentary scrutineers, it is vital not to exaggerate the alienation of scrutineers from the court. Whilst the Accounts Commission did help to forge a country alignment in Parliament, and listed a huge number of mismanagements under William, it always assumed the good faith of the King's government. The Commission adopted the role of ally in administrative reformation, and provided vital information to the King as well as to the Commons. Thus, in the first report, William and his honest servants were portrayed as the victims, not the perpetrators, of miscarriages. The King was informed that he had paid back loans to people who had lent, not their own, but public money. He was told that he was unwittingly paying his revenue officers business expenses; that excessive pensions were being unaccountably doled out to worthless individuals; and that his servants

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<sup>88</sup> Historical Manuscripts Commission, Report ... Portland, vol.3, p. 507 - Robert Harley to Sir Edward Harley, 17th November, 1692.

<sup>93</sup> The most striking image was used by William Leveson Gower who stated "I am for taking out all the deer in this King's park that were in King James'". Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, col.465 - debate on Irish affairs, 29th November, 1689.



had increased their salaries "upon slight pretences".<sup>94</sup> Most importantly, William was informed that it was his own great project, the war, which was being most hampered by waste. For instance, the Commissioners pointed out that the system of checking army payments had broken down, with the result that many warrants had been obtained to release money above the number of effective men. Consequently, funds were unaccountably filched away and officers complained that "they had received very little money, although they find great sums charged by the Treasurer at War".<sup>95</sup>

The Commons response to the first report reinforced the sense of participation in a royal programme. The resolutions taken after consideration of the Commission's document censured the King's administration only mildly, and were designed to provide more details of those who defrauded him. They asked for greater details of salaries and fees, and asked the Commissioners to list those who charged William for their business expenses and had fraudulently lent him public money.<sup>96</sup> MPs' speeches, too, presented the report as helpful to the monarch. They claimed it would allow him to know the full extent of the corruption with which he was still surrounded. Sir John Thompson stood "amazed that, in the best times and governments, things should still be in such darkness". He "believed we are under the best of Kings, but never was so much goodness so abused". William was "in hands that do not understand their business"; he was "wholly ignorant of these matters, and therefore I think we ought to address the King to acquaint him therewith".<sup>97</sup> Sir Charles Sedley agreed. He demanded "that the King might be acquainted with these matters. He keeps at Kensington and the courtiers keep him there as in a box."<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Historical Manuscripts Commission, Manuscripts ... Lords 1690-1, pp.404-8.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid. p.408.

<sup>96</sup> Journals ... House of Commons, vol.10, p.572.

<sup>97</sup> Grey, Debates, vol.10, p.191; Horwitz, Parliamentary diary ... Luttrell, pp.58, 55.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid. p.55.

This underlying spirit of collaboration survived even manoeuvres by the supporters of the ministry to emasculate the Commission. In 1692, the Lords made an attempt to alter the legislation renewing the Commission's authority, so that MPs more sympathetic to the administration might sit on it. Country spokesmen objected, and bitter debate ensued when the Commons attempted to secure their original list of names by tacking it to a money bill.<sup>99</sup> However, even at this time of strain, Clarges and his friends still insisted they were the court's true allies. Christopher Musgrave used William's financial openness to justify the tack, and argued that the monarch himself demanded an independent and effective Commission.

It is also said the King desires an account may be taken of the moneys given; if so, it is no doubt the Lords will pass it. And this clause will tend much to satisfy the country whom you have loaded so much, and therefore I think it is for the service of the King to pass it.<sup>100</sup>

In the early 1690s William's propagandists had greater difficulty ameliorating country criticism of treason trials, and of executive influence over the legislature, than of financial waste. This was because in these other areas, William flatly rejected Commons initiatives. As has been mentioned, the King insisted that treason, place and triennial bills aimed at the vital core of his prerogative, and was prepared to kill them off with a weapon as blunt as the veto.<sup>101</sup> In this situation, there was limited scope for reformation discourse to operate. With William ensuring that the executive and backbenchers

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid. pp.161-3, 166, 170-1, 179, 184, 186-8.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid. p.188.

<sup>101</sup> In parliamentary debates on these issues, court spokesmen stressed the prerogative, and the incompatibility of what was proposed with effective royal power. The only initiatives to ameliorate the starkness of the division were attempts to engineer disputes between the two Houses of Parliament. For example, court spokesmen in the debate on the triennial bill on the 28th January, 1693, suggested that the Commons should not accept the bill, which had originated in the Lords, because it represented an attempt by the Upper House to control the Lower. Sir Joseph Tredenham brought this point together with the prerogative argument, saying "We ought to be tender of the King's prerogative, and the calling and dissolving of Parliaments, the chiefest flower of the crown. It is not reasonable to receive such a proposal from the Lords", Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, p.758.

remained starkly opposed, it was difficult to present his regime as an ideal country court. It was, perhaps, a mark of the difficulties the courtly ideologists faced on these issues, that their usually-close political cohesion broke down. When the bishops' loyalty to the executive could not be squared with their reforming approval for country campaigns, they were torn into opposing camps by contradictory principles. On the triennial bill, for instance, Burnet sided with the country initiative, whilst Sharp vigorously defended his royal master's prerogative.<sup>102</sup> By contrast, on the 1696 attainder of Fenwick - an incident which raised the arguments over treason trials - Sharp, Kidder and Fowler attempted to defend the accused, whilst Burnet, Tenison and Patrick voted to protect the government.<sup>103</sup> After one parliamentary debate over the Fenwick case, Sharp and Burnet even descended to verbal brawling in the lobby of the Lords.<sup>104</sup>

Yet, whilst the executive was in no position to promote itself as a country court in discussions over treason and legislative autonomy, this did not mean that the rhetoric of royal reformation was of absolutely no use. The evidence from parliamentary debates is fragmentary, but it seems to suggest that courtly propaganda had created a general political atmosphere which helped to contain criticism of the executive within relatively safe forms. Even in areas where William was openly obstructing them, backbench politicians did not transgress the rhetorical parameters set by the country court. By and large, they portrayed the King as an ally in the reforming process, and continued to present their activities as a contribution to a Williamite campaign. Parliamentarians had either been genuinely convinced of William's virtue by the court's general propaganda campaign, or they found it difficult to construct arguments which rejected the royal image. If any country members had doubts about the King's purging zeal, they clearly judged it prudent to put them aside in public, and develop arguments for their favoured measures which incorporated the court's claims.

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<sup>102</sup> See Hart, Life ... Sharp, pp.208-9; Clarke and Foxcroft, Life ... Burnet, p.316.

<sup>103</sup> Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, p.337.

<sup>104</sup> Hart, Life ... Sharp, pp.206-7.



This was evident in the points used to promote place, triennial and treason bills. One of the most popular ways to advance these measures in the early 1690s was to suggest that they must be passed now because William's reign offered a unique opportunity to establish virtuous government. The line is well exemplified by Sir Charles Sedley's intervention in a debate on a treason bill in 1691. Advocating the measure, Sedley implored,

Let us not then here ... deprive his Majesty of the glory of passing an Act, which most men in all ages desired, but could never hope to obtain, but from so gracious a prince.<sup>105</sup>

This argument countered the arguments of Privy Councillors who opposed the bill, but it also limited the backbencher's assault. It flattered the King by suggesting there was a sort of "Williamite moment" in which beneficial and virtuous legislation might be passed. Sedley's words therefore constructed his own version of a country court. The MP presented William as a man prepared to break with entrenched executive corruption, and co-operate with his people to root it out.

Sedley was a peculiarly passionate fan of the King, but his language was typical of campaigners for treason bills and measures to ensure parliamentary autonomy. The idea of a Williamite moment became almost the chief argument for the former type of reform in the early 1690s. In the same 1691 debate which saw Sedley defend his "gracious" prince, John Howe warned the House that if they did not obtain a treason trial bill "in the time when we have a King that will secure our liberties, we never shall".<sup>106</sup> The following year, the arguments for unique opportunity were re-introduced with the treason measure. In a debate on the 18th November, Sir Christopher Musgrave said the time was right for the bill, because it would be hard to get it when worse monarchs were ruling. Robert Harley stated "I think it is the proper time to get good laws in a good reign, and therefore I am for this bill

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<sup>105</sup> Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, col.685 - debate on the 31st November, 1691.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid. col.686.

now."<sup>107</sup> A week later, John Granville summarised the mood with the following contribution.

The best time to have this bill, is when we can get it. Now we have a good prince on the throne, and no more seasonable time than now.<sup>108</sup>

Similar points were made to promote place and triennial legislation. On the 28th January 1693, Robert Harley argued for a measure to exclude placemen on the grounds that "such remedies, to obtain good things, must be obtained in good reigns".<sup>109</sup> On the 9th February the same year, a bill for frequent Parliaments was pressed by Goodwin Wharton who explained "I have no distrust of the King, but would have it now to be gained against [a future] bad prince."<sup>110</sup>

The power of the country-court was as well revealed when William rejected Commons proposals, as when backbenchers advanced their measures. On the face of it, royal vetoes of place, treason and triennial bills ought to have dissipated the mirage of a country King amongst backbenchers. Yet curiously, such actions merely strengthened calls for an alliance against the common enemy. Historians are fortunate that they can study one such reaction in detail. On the 9th January, 1694, when the House of Commons went into a Grand Committee to discuss the royal veto of a place bill, Anchitell Grey was present, and wrote an extensive account of the proceedings.<sup>111</sup> Grey's notes reveal that many MPs were extremely angry and reflected bitterly on the fact that they had granted vast sums to William before he repaid them with such scant regard. Some presumed to lecture their monarch on constitutional practice, and some hinted darkly that supply should be withheld in punishment for the court's actions.<sup>112</sup> Yet, despite their anger, most

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<sup>107</sup> Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, col.713; Horwitz, Parliamentary diary ... Luttrell, p.237.

<sup>108</sup> Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.5, col.740.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid. vol.5, col.760.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid. cols.766-7.

<sup>111</sup> Grey, Debates, vol.10, pp.375-380.

<sup>112</sup> See especially Paul Foley and William Bromley's contributions; Grey, Debates, vol.10, pp.376, 378.

members were careful to preserve the image of William as an ally, who shared their fundamental objectives. The debate was dominated both by the search for an explanation of what had happened which did not question the King's virtue; and by appeals to the monarch to recognise the place bill as part of his own reformation programme.

The most common explanation of William's veto in the Commons discussions was corrupt advice. Clarges kicked off the debate with a ringing denunciation of vicious royal servants whom, he claimed, had prevailed upon the King.

I am sorry for the occasion of the Committee. I will not say any thing concerning his Majesty, only of the evil Counsellors that presumed so to advise the King. ... Formerly, just Bills and Grievances were first passed; and after that, the Money given. Now, in great respect to his Majesty, the order is inverted, and our Grievances denied redress. I cannot think the King to blame, since his Declaration hath been to concur with us in any thing, to make us happy. I should have been glad if the Counsellors, or some of them, would have given some reason for the Rejection of this Bill.<sup>113</sup>

Sir Thomas thus preserved the rhetoric of alliance between monarch and backbenchers by conjuring up a common enemy in evil advisers. Clarges' trick proved popular. As the debate proceeded, more members spoke of wicked counsellors, and these figures became the chief target of the address which the House sent to William when it had finished its deliberations. Charles Hutchinson complained that gifts of money by the House had gained it less interest at court than "false" men, whilst Geoffrey Jeffreys demanded to know who exactly had recommended the rejection.<sup>114</sup> Although this latter suggestion was opposed because it threatened to stir up damaging partisan jealousies, members did resolve that whosoever had advised the King to veto was an enemy to the monarchs, and finally addressed William to

harken to the Advice of your Parliament, and not to the secret Advices of particular Persons, who may have private

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid. pp.375-6.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid. pp.376, 377.



Interests of their own, separate from the true Interest of your Majesty and your People.<sup>115</sup>

As the Commons homed in on evil counsellors, they also tried to re-emphasise their common purpose with their prince by presenting the rejected bill as another effort to purge out sin. Member after member stressed that legislation was a "remedy for corruption"; a measure for "clearing" parliamentary vice; a bill which tended "immediately to keep ourselves uncorrupt". Some MPs took the argument further and bluntly told William that his actions had undermined his whole case since coming to the throne. A deceived King was departing from his own reformation. "The nature of the bill" Hutchinson reminded the House, "was to take off scandal". Its rejection only gave ammunition to Jacobites who could say "we have only changed our prince, but not for the better, at so many millions expense".<sup>116</sup> John Thompson similarly presented the royal veto as betrayal of Williamite principles. "When I gave my voice to make the Prince of Orange King, I thought to have seen better times than these."<sup>117</sup> Such arguments permitted sharp censure without irrevocably souring relations with William.

In fact, the ideal of a country court had so controlled the debate, that the executive was left with considerable scope for regaining support. When William replied to the Commons address, he played upon the evident faith in him as a reformer and accepted the offers of a renewed alliance which had been wrapped up in the backbench criticisms. He acknowledged he may have been let down by advisers, and promised to work with Parliament in future. He thanked the Commons for its "zeal in the common interest" and concluded,

I am persuaded, that nothing can so much conduce to the Happiness and Welfare of this Kingdom, as an entire Confidence between the King and People; which I shall, by all means endeavour to preserve: And I assure you, I shall

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid. p.377; Journals ... House of Commons, vol.11, p.72 - the address was sent to the King on the 27th.

<sup>116</sup> Grey, Debates, vol.10, p.376.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

look on upon all such Persons to be my Enemies, who shall advise any thing that may lessen it.<sup>118</sup>

Whilst this reply was rejected as inadequate by some, it was effective enough to stall any further Commons action over the royal veto that session. In the debate on the King's answer, many MPs expressed delight that William had taken their side against his corrupt officials, and a motion to press him for more specific commitments was heavily outvoted.<sup>119</sup>

Of course, it is possible to account for the behaviour just described without invoking courtly reformation propaganda. It is arguable that the language of country members in early 1690s was entirely conventional, and does not, therefore, need a deliberately created image of a reforming King to explain it. Such a case would be based on the observation that claims to support a virtuous monarch against his corrupt servants were traditional gambits, wheeled out to attack royal policy without risking treasonous reflections on the head of state.

Since so much country language in the 1690s, especially the concentration on evil councillors, was stereotyped, such an objection has weight. However, although MPs in the 1690s were undoubtedly using conventions, the decade in which they lived was sufficiently different from preceding periods, that mere rhetorical tradition is probably not a strong enough explanation for their style of argument. In the first place, the terms of the Revolution settlement had begun to open up the possibility of criticising the King directly. During the debates in the 1689 Convention, the attempt to define why it had been legitimate to displace a ruler had led to the recognition that monarchy was a trust.<sup>120</sup> The Declaration of Rights suggested that the King's title was no longer indefeasible, but portrayed it as conditional on his ruling under the

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<sup>118</sup> Journals ... House of Commons, vol.11, p.74. The King's answer was delivered on the 31st January.

<sup>119</sup> The debate was on the 1st February and is reported in Grey, Debates, vol.10, pp.382-6. The House voted against further action by 229 votes to 88 - Journals ... House of Commons, vol.11, p.75.

<sup>120</sup> See Horwitz, "1689 (and all that)".

constitution, and on his governing in the public interest.<sup>121</sup> Moreover, royal adherence to these conditions was held, at least in extremis, to be judged by subjects. Once this view of monarchy had been accepted, personal criticism of the monarch became thinkable. Since it was recognised that the King could do wrong, men might warn their ruler that he was abusing his trust, and attach the blame for miscarriages to him.<sup>122</sup> The 1690s were also different from previous decades because William's position was challenged. Jacobite critics, not believing their target to be a legitimate ruler, were not constrained by the tradition of avoiding attacks on the head of state, and went for the jugular. James' supporters produced a widely available series of attacks upon William's policies, which blamed him personally for miscarriages and disasters. The new theoretical ability to criticise the King directly was thus joined by a rhetoric which did not hesitate to do so.

In these circumstances, the country members' arguments over treason, place and triennial bills may have been conventions, but they were not platitudes. Adopting a language which limited and contained criticism of the court was a positive choice. It meant rejecting Jacobitism, and the new possibility of laying blame at William's door. The country members mode of discourse, does, therefore, require some explanation. Courtly reformation, with its construction of a country

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<sup>121</sup> There has been some discussion of whether William's acceptance of the Declaration of Rights was intended as a condition of the offer of the throne, see Schwoerer, Declaration of Rights, p.6. Obviously, the new King's refusal to make any specific promises to uphold the Declaration worked against the idea of a conditional offer, but given that the document was read out to William before the throne was proffered, it would have been difficult to escape some impression that the monarch had entered into an enforceable and limiting contract.

<sup>122</sup> Janelle Greenburg has argued that after the Revolution the old doctrine that the King could do no wrong came to imply, not that monarchs were unimpeachable, but that if Kings forfeited their royal position when they did do wrong. See Janelle Greenburg, "Our grand maxim of state, 'the King can do no wrong'", History of Political Thought, 12 (1991), pp.209-228. For further reflections on the removal of the constitutional shield protecting the monarch in 1688, see Howard Nenner, "The constitution in retrospect from 1689", in Jones, Liberty secured?, pp.88-122, especially pp.105-7. By the mid 1690s, as the 1693 place bill debate shows, large numbers of parliamentarians seem to have concluded that the King must act on advice from his legislature, and could be censured for not doing so, see Weston and Greenburg, Subjects and sovereigns, pp.219-221.



court provides a cogent one. It is arguable that country members, shocked by what had happened under the Restoration regimes, and bruised by their experience of administrative secrecy, waste and ambition, could only have been persuaded to continue with old forms of criticism by an executive which demonstrated that it shared their analysis of what had gone wrong, and which offered an alliance to combat the agreed source of evil.

## V

Country activity after the Treaty of Ryswick must be considered separately from that before, because anti-court politics was largely restructured in the mid 1690s. Although many of the same people were involved in attacking the executive after 1697 as had always been, and although some of their demands were familiar, there was a transformation in the allegiances, causes, methods and beliefs of country politicians.

The first aspect of this reconstruction was a change in the partisan configuration of country politics. In the late 1690s, the cross-party country action which had characterised the war years was largely replaced as suspicion of the executive became an overwhelmingly Tory phenomenon. The re-alignment had begun in 1694. Then, a young and intransigent group of Whigs (soon to be known as the "junto"), completed a takeover of the ministry which had begun the previous year with the overthrow of the Earl of Nottingham.<sup>123</sup> During the resulting Whig monopoly, Tories had been pushed towards a country position, since the sight of their enemies in power had made them mistrustful of the executive. By 1695, those Tories who had participated in earlier ministries, and had once defended the court, had begun to adopt the language of suspicion.<sup>124</sup> At the same time, country-minded Whigs, who felt betrayed by the hunger for office amongst the junto, began to break their traditional allegiances, and to co-operate with Tories in

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<sup>123</sup> The political processes which led to this Whig domination are laid out in Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, chapter 6; Feiling, History ... Tory party, pp.294-8.

<sup>124</sup> On the 25th January, 1695, Nottingham gave a speech savaging ministers behaviour over the Lancashire treason trials and attacking the Bank of England. Keith Feiling, History ... Tory party, pp.307-8.

attacking the ministry.<sup>125</sup> The Tories thus reconstituted themselves as a country party and added demands for legislative autonomy, parliamentary scrutiny and judicial independence to their old ecclesiastical and constitutional platforms.<sup>126</sup> With the junto Whigs defending the prerogatives and influence of the executive, party politics no longer cut across court/country divisions, but tended to re-enforce them, and bestowed a greater consistency and clarity on anti-ministerial action.

Country politics was also changed after Ryswick by the emergence of new controversies between the executive and its critics. Some of these were disputes which had begun in the early decade, but which had only come to prominence once the war had ceased to dominate the political agenda. A prime example was the argument over Irish land grants. Following William's defeat of the Irish Jacobites at Limerick in 1691, the King had given many estates forfeited by his enemies to close friends and courtiers.<sup>127</sup> Unease that these lands had been lost to private profit, rather than augmenting public resources, was expressed at the time; but it was only with the coming of peace that the Tory/country group of MPs made a full investigation of the matter, and demanded resumption of William's gifts.<sup>128</sup> Other novel issues were

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<sup>125</sup> See Hill, Robert Harley, chapters 3-4; Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, pp.317-8.

<sup>126</sup> For summaries of this process see Jones, Court and country, pp.268-278 and chapter 15; Plumb, Growth ... stability, pp.140-152.

For the identity of Tory and country in the late 1690s, see, David Hayton, "The 'country' interest and the party system 1689-c.1720", in Jones, Party and management, pp.37-86. Geoffrey Holmes has retreated from his late 1960s position that country politics in the late Stuart period was a bi-partisan phenomenon - see British politics revised edition, introduction pp.xxxvii-xliii.

<sup>127</sup> See J.G.Simms, Williamite confiscations, chapter B.

<sup>128</sup> Bills were introduced in Parliament to apply the estates to the charge of the war in 1690-1, 1691-2, but were killed when the King prorogued the legislature. After the loss of the first bill, William promised not to grant any further lands until Parliament had had a chance to resolve the issue, Journals ... House of Lords, vol.14 p.618. However, he appeared to break his word, causing the Commons to launch an enquiry and address the King to apply the forfeited lands for the public benefit, Journals ... House of Commons vol.10, p.843. This was not successful in halting the grant of estates, and more unsuccessful bills were introduced in 1693-4 and 1694-5.

In 1699 the Commons pressed the issue harder and set up a Commission to investigate all grants made since 1691. This resulted in an act in 1700 to confiscate all the estates. Simms, Williamite

peculiar to the post-war years. The Peace of Ryswick itself sparked off a new argument about the future of the English army. Once a large body of soldiers was no longer required to fight the French, a dispute broke out between the court and the Tory/country block over whether it should be retained as a standing force, or disbanded. Whilst William wished to keep an effective military as a bulwark against possible future French aggression, his opponents worried that such a force might become the tool of an ambitious executive. They argued that a large army would provide the court with an instrument with which it might coerce Parliament; and suggested that it would provide the government with vast new source of patronage with which to corrupt its legislative scrutineers. The battle was played out in a series of parliamentary debates between 1697 and 1699 which resulted in the reduction of England's land forces to a rump.<sup>129</sup> In the late 1690s the Tory/country block also broke new ground exploiting fears about public finance. Early in the reign, the decision not to meet the huge costs of William's war entirely out of current taxation had resulted in the creation of mechanisms to manage a national debt.<sup>130</sup> Although most politicians recognised the necessity of this deficit financing, there was increasing anxiety about its political impact. Many MPs in the Tory/country camp began to worry that the new Bank of England and the novel market in securities was increasing the power of the court. They feared that personal wealth was being tied up in government stock, so that men were discouraged from criticism of the executive which might undermine public

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confiscations, chapters 9 and 10.

<sup>129</sup> Various aspects of this campaign are covered in Lois G.Schwoerer, No standing armies!: the anti-army ideology in seventeenth-century England (Baltimore, 1974); Childs, The British army, chapter 8; Angus McInnes, Robert Harley, pp.35-7; Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, pp.222-231, 249-254.

William was so exasperated by the reduction of the army that he considered retiring to Holland, see William Coxe ed., Private and original correspondence of Charles Talbot, Duke of Shrewsbury, (London, 1821), pp.574-5.

<sup>130</sup> P.G.Dickson, Financial revolution, pp.39-89.



credit. As a result, attacks upon the new instruments of finance became an established part of the country canon.<sup>131</sup>

A new appeal to public opinion formed a third element in the restructuring of country politics. During the war, country politicians had made relatively little use of the press to bolster their parliamentary activities. Some tracts such as John Hampton's Some short considerations (1692), had been written to support country causes, but such efforts had been rare, and were usually the work of individuals, rather than forming part of a coordinated campaign.<sup>132</sup> After 1697, the situation was transformed. In the last years of William's reign, Tory/country initiatives at Westminster were always accompanied by huge outpourings of supporting literature. Perhaps encouraged by the lapse of licensing legislation in 1695, and the greater vigour of the political press which resulted, writers churned out works blasting the court and its policies.<sup>133</sup> Most significantly, the political leadership of the Tory/country block was heavily involved in the activity. J.A.Downie has shown that Robert Harley was in contact with a number of political writers, including John Trenchard, John Toland and Charles Davenant, who were responsible for many of the most influential works. Harley employed the writers to produce specific polemics, provided them with information, and coordinated their efforts with his own parliamentary manoeuvres.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Brewer, Sinews of power, p.206, comments on the perception of the new financial arrangements as a device to tie men to the Whig court. See also, Dickinson, Liberty and property, pp.106-7; Dickson, Financial revolution, pp.15-35.

<sup>132</sup> See Downie, Robert Harley, pp.19-27, for an assessment of the rudimentary state of the country press before 1697 - pp.24-5 deals with Hampden's pamphlet and its role as of country/Whig manifesto in the autumn of 1692.

<sup>133</sup> For the repeal of the Licensing Act, see Raymond Astbury, "The renewal of the Licensing Act in 1693 and its lapse in 1695", The Library, 5th series 23 (1978). For summaries of its impact see J.A.Downie, "The development of the political press", in Clyve Jones ed., Britain in the first age of party, (London, 1987), pp.111-128; G.C.Gibbs, "Press and public opinion: prospective", in Jones ed., Liberty secured?, pp.231-265. especially pp.256-264.

<sup>134</sup> Downie, Robert Harley, pp.28-57.

J.G.A.Pocock has pointed to a fourth new feature of country politics in the late 1690s: its ideology. Pocock has shown that as the pamphleteers worked to advance Tory/country causes after Ryswick, they developed an innovatory set of discourses with which to argue. He has suggested that the core of this new ideology was a "civic humanist" language, developed over previous decades, particularly by the Interregnum republican, James Harrington.<sup>135</sup> The key features of the language - which was extensively modified in the 1670s to support a monarchical polity - were belief in a balanced constitution; stress upon the importance of checks on executive power; and an idealisation of land-owning and arms-bearing citizens as independent bulwarks against government encroachment.<sup>136</sup> The discourse was also characterised by what might be called a "sociological" view of politics. It interpreted transformations in the pattern of power in the context of economic and cultural processes, paying particular attention to changing patterns of property holding.<sup>137</sup> Despite a lacuna in the appearance of "civic humanism" in the early 1690s, Pocock argued that the discourse was taken up by the Tory/country block after 1697 and developed further to criticise the junto court. Adapted to address the huge growth of William's fiscal/military state, it was applied to attack the standing army and financial system advocated by the Whig-dominated executive.<sup>138</sup> Country ideology at the end of the seventeenth century was, therefore, re-modelled on what Pocock called "neo-Harringtonian" lines. In practice, this meant it was elaborated to include a detailed analysis of the decline of the independent and public-spirited English freeholder;

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<sup>135</sup> For Harrington's contribution, see J.G.A.Pocock ed., The political works of James Harrington, (Cambridge, 1977), historical introduction pp.1-154.

<sup>136</sup> Pocock tells the story of the discourse in J.G.A.Pocock, "Civic humanism and its role in Anglo-American thought", in Pocock, Politics, language and time, pp.80-103, as well as in "Machiavelli, Harrington"; "Varieties of Whiggism"; Machiavellian moment, and the introduction to Harrington's works.

<sup>137</sup> Pocock uses the term "sociological" to describe his writers' works in Political works ... Harrington, p.139.

<sup>138</sup> See Pocock, Machiavellian moment, pp.423-8; Pocock, Political works ... Harrington, pp.135-142.

and expanded to consider the cultural and economic forces which allowed the executive to extend its influence.<sup>139</sup>

The clear question raised by the general restructuring of country politics, is whether it affected the ability of William's court to contain criticism. Obviously, there were several ominous features of the new situation, which reduced the possibility that suspicious parliamentarians might co-operate with the executive, and direct their attacks into safe channels. The assimilation of country sentiment within the Tory party, for instance, increased the bitterness between the court and its critics, as it added the old partisan hatreds to backbench mistrust of those in power.<sup>140</sup> The re-alignment also improved the organisation of country members in Parliament. It replaced the earlier temporary alliances with a permanent grouping, whose leaders, such as Harley, could plan coherent strategies against the ministry.<sup>141</sup> Similarly, the increase in the range of issues debated, and the organised use of the press, raised the stakes by expanding the forum of disagreement. By the end of the reign, country pamphleteers had launched a systematic attack on the whole record of the junto court, and demanded that every Englishman take sides in the dispute.<sup>142</sup> However, for the historian of courtly reformation, it was the threat from the ideological changes in country politics which demands most attention. This is because the sort of language which Pocock described emerging in the late 1690s, endangered the parallels of thought between the executive and its critics which had made collaboration possible during the war.

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<sup>139</sup> A Tory/country defence of the landed classes after the late 1690s is explored in Holmes, British politics, chapter 5; Issac Kramnick, Bolingbroke and his circle: the politics of nostalgia in the age of Walpole (Cambridge, Mass., 1968).

<sup>140</sup> The most graphic illustration of this new Tory/country hatred was the attempt to impeach the leading junto ministers in 1701. For the story of this, at least as it affected Somers, see William L. Sachse, Lord Somers: a political portrait (Manchester, 1975), chapter 9.

<sup>141</sup> By 1700, Harley was commanding a political block sufficiently solid that he could use a reliable majority in Parliament to demand terms for coming into office. See Horwitz, Parliament, policy and politics, chapter 12.

<sup>142</sup> William Speck had identified the late 1690s as the period when the entire English political nation polarised into hostile camps - see Speck, Tory and Whig, introduction.



The problem with neo-Harringtonianism was that it abandoned the debauched Restoration court as the sole source and paradigm of corruption. Concerned with the decline of a landed and armed citizenry, the new country rhetoric did not confine itself to the evil influence of the men surrounding Charles and James. Rather it was more interested in wider social processes, many of which were perceived to operate beyond the period of the Restoration regimes. For instance, the leading critics of the army ranged far outside the thirty years after 1660 in their writings. Andrew Fletcher, one of Pocock's leading neo-Harringtonians explored the whole of post-medieval European history in his 1697 pamphlet A discourse concerning militias.<sup>143</sup> Demonstrating how the armed and landed nobility had lost its social prominence across the continent, Fletcher began his story around 1500, when the invention of print, the compass needle and gunpowder had initiated cultural and economic change.<sup>144</sup> At the other extreme, and more disturbingly, writers on the junto's financial system concentrated on the short period since 1688. They began to consider how the economic effects of William's war had weakened the ancient gentry in the face of the court's challenge. This sort of language threatened to corrode the basis of alliance between court and country. If Restoration debauchery were not to be blamed for everything, then the two sides might no longer recognise the same enemy, and court appeals for aid in purging a common foe might fall in deafer ears.

The danger of such an irreparable breach can be seen in the new bogeymen who emerged in the literature of the late decade. As they analyzed the decline of England's ancient gentry, country writers became interested in new elites, which they believed had begun to usurp the position of public-spirited landowners. Their "Pocockian" understanding of contemporary ills began to revolve around an emerging class, whose adherence to the junto court posed a threat to England's balanced government. For country writers, the new class - a "monied interest" of

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<sup>143</sup> [Andrew Fletcher], A discourse concerning militias and standing armies with relation to the past and present governments of Europe and of England in particular, (London, 1697).

<sup>144</sup> Ibid. especially pp.7-10.

government creditors and stock dealers - held considerable influence by virtue of their wealth and alliance with the executive. However, unlike the landed gentlemen, whom they displaced, they had no estates or influence independent of government, and so would never endanger their position by restraining the court.<sup>145</sup> For our purposes, the most important point about the new elite was that it was portrayed as a product of William's reign and policies. Country rhetoric stressed that those who undermined virtuous landed men, and supported the junto, were very recent social upstarts. According to the pamphleteers, most members of the Whig/court camp had been nobodies before 1688. They were "men shot up ... like mushrooms"; "worthless fellows [grown] rich"; "scoundrels [made] gentlemen of great estates", "glittering meteor[s]" who had very recently gained great houses, equipages and incomes at the expense of older elites.<sup>146</sup> Moreover, these nobodies were shown to have scaled the social ladder by taking advantage of post-revolutionary opportunities. They had been parasites on the bureaucracy, and on the system of public finance, which had emerged only in the last few years to service William's wars. The epitome of this dangerous class of person was Charles Davenant's Tom Double.<sup>147</sup> Introduced in two pamphlets which combined a civic humanist account of gentry decline, with popular, knockabout satire, Davenant's character encapsulated all the qualities

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<sup>145</sup> Pocock, Political works ... Harrington, pp.137-8; Pocock, Machiavellian moment, pp.450-1.

<sup>146</sup> [James Drake], The history of the last Parliament begun at Westminster the tenth day of February, in the twelfth year of the reign of King William (London, 1702), p.6; A short defence of the last Parliament with a word of advice for all electors to the ensuing (London, 1699); England's enemies exposed, p.33; [John Trenchard], A letter from a souldier to the Commons of England, occasioned by an address now carrying on by the Protestants in Ireland (London, 1702), p.25.

<sup>147</sup> Davenant was to become one of the chief country pamphleteers of the late 1690s, working closely with Harley. He had come to notice with several attacks on junto deficit finance. See [Charles Davenant], Discourses on the publick revenues and on the trade of England, (London, 1698); [Charles Davenant], An essay on the probable methods of making a people gainers in the ballance of trade, (London, 1699). For Davenant's career, see D.Waddell, "Charles Davenant, 1656-1714: a biographical sketch", Economic History Review, second series 11 (1958-9), pp.279-288.

of the arriviste, pro-junto class.<sup>148</sup> His career had been shaped by a conscious determination to advance himself at the expense of the independent and "ancient gentry".<sup>149</sup> Like all his colleagues, he had risen over the backs of honest English citizens by exploiting circumstances since 1688. He had manipulated the new national debt to defraud the public and line his own pocket.<sup>150</sup> He had promoted new taxes, like those on malt and leather, to increase the money available for embezzlement.<sup>151</sup> He had been to Ireland after James' defeat to ensure he got a share of the spoils.<sup>152</sup> As a result he has risen from obscure origins to the top of society. Born of a London shoemaker, and sacked for fraud in James II's reign, he was living the life of a Lord by the time Davenant first introduced him in 1701.<sup>153</sup> In the author's cleverly constructed dialogue, Double boasted of his country estate to his companion, Whiglove, and reminded him

how I am lodg'd in Town. ... I have my French Cook, and Wax-Candles; no Butchers Meat comes on my Table; I drink nothing by Hermitage, Champagne and Burgundy ... my very Footmen scorn French Claret. I keep my Coach and six, and out of my fine Chariot I loll and laugh to see gallant Fellows, Colonels and Admirals, trudging a-foot in the Dirt.<sup>154</sup>

All this, of course, reversed the image of corruption which had prevailed before Ryswick, and made the task of William's propagandists far more difficult. The old paradigm of government evil - the debauched

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<sup>148</sup> [Charles Davenant], The true picture of a modern Whig, set forth in a dialogue between Mr. Whiglove and Mr. Double, two under-spur-leathers to the late ministry (London, 1701); [Charles Davenant], Tom Double return'd out of the country: or the true picture of a modern Whig set forth in a second dialogue between Mr. Whiglove and Mr. Double, (London, 1702).

<sup>149</sup> Davenant uses the phrase "ancient gentry" in Tom Double return'd, p.32.

<sup>150</sup> This point is made repeatedly throughout the two Tom Double pamphlets, but see especially [Davenant], Tom Double return'd, p.38-9.

<sup>151</sup> [Davenant], True picture, p.25.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid. p.24.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid. pp.15-16, for Double's beggarly career before the Revolution.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid. 31.



Restoration courtier - had held court and country together. Now, however, figures like Tom Double began to undermine this consensus. The two sides had now only an eroded basis for alliance, because "neo-Harringtonian" fears about the fate of the landed had redescribed William's reign in country rhetoric. No longer was it a period of hope, when the nation might come together under the court's reformation to tackle the sins of the past. It was a darkening age, when new, and very destructive, forces had been called into being.<sup>155</sup>

Yet, despite all that has been said, it is well to be cautious before writing off courtly reformation after Ryswick. Whilst Pocock's work does point to important developments in country ideology, it is vital not to overplay the changes which occurred. Pocock directed attention to the most "theoretical" pamphlets and passages of late decade literature: ones where the social analysis of gentry decline, was carried on most explicitly and systematically. If the material is read less selectively, is clear that, although Pocock's "civic humanist" rhetoric was important, it was not the whole story. Vital elements of the pre-Ryswick country worldview survived to run in tandem with Pocockian discourse. Indeed, the new "sociological" models of corruption often appear to be little more than new polemical bottles, into which some very familiar fears were poured.

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<sup>155</sup> The publications which perhaps did most to spread this picture of gloom was the series of printed lists of rhetorical "quearies" to be asked of court supporters. They gave an impression of corruption spreading through the English body politic. See, [Robert Harley], The Taunton-Dean letter from E.C. to J.F at the Grecian Coffee House London (London, 1701); [Robert Harley], A letter from the Grecian Coffee House in answer to the Taunton-Dean letter, to which is added a paper of queries sent from Worcester (London, 1701); The Whigs thirty two quearies, and as many of the Tories in answer to them, (London, 1701). Other passages in country literature contributed to a sense of near universal degeneration, accelerating since the Revolution. See, for an almost random selection from a vast literature, [Charles Davenant], Essay upon the probable means, pp.216-18, which presented 1688 as a missed opportunity to root out corruption; England's enemies exposed; Short defence of the last Parliament; An account of the many frauds and abuses, which have been frequently committed in the late war with France, and are continued, [1700]; A learned speech made at the Town-hall of R---ing, (London, 1701); Considerations on the nature of Parliaments, and our present elections, [London, 1698]; Fletcher, Discourse of militias, p.29, which came close to accusing William himself of dangerous ambition.

I have known a great many deluded by Pleasures and Luxury to betray their Country, who were not to be wrought upon by any other Motives. Therefore you see one of our Noble Friends, who is still at the Head of our Designs, sets himself in good Earnest to corrupt the Manners of all our Youth, in order to subvert the Constitution: ... He is the Patron of Licence and Disorder; his House is the School of Intemperance: What Lust in any of his Followers does he not study to please? Women, Musical Entertainments, Riots and Debaucheries of all kinds, are ready at hand for such as will be drawn into his Party by those sort of Alurements.<sup>160</sup>

The continuing moral basis of country thought after Ryswick was also apparent in the use of classical history. The decline of the Roman polity was an important theme in the pamphlets of the late decade, because it could be used to demonstrate the deleterious effects of social change on balanced constitutions. Special emphasis was placed on imperial expansion, which had disrupted the early Roman society of armed and landed citizens, and led through inequality and rivalry to slavery.<sup>161</sup> Yet whilst the pamphleteers' classical scholarship pointed to sociological models of England's plight, the story they told could also be read as a simple moral tale. The pamphleteers made it clear that imperial expansion would not have been nearly as dangerous to the Romans, had not cruelty, intemperance, avarice and dishonesty been prevalent amongst them. One of the most sustained accounts of Roman decline was Davenant's history of imperial debt in his polemic against William's Irish grants - the Discourse upon grants and resumptions (1700). Despite the work's careful attention to social forces and the principles of sound financial management, it was ultimately the moral failings of individual Emperors which drove the narrative forward. Roman decline resulted from rulers who raided the public purse to feed their

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<sup>160</sup> [Davenant], Tom Double return'd, p.95.

<sup>161</sup> See for example Walter Moyle, "An essay on the constitution of the Roman government" [1697], in Caroline Robbins ed., Two English republican tracts, (Cambridge, 1969); [John Toland], The militia reform'd, or an easy scheme of furnishing England with a constant land force ... without endangering the publick liberty (London, 1697); [John Trenchard and Walter Moyle], An argument shewing that a standing army is inconsistent with a free government (London, 1697), pp.7-9. A similar point about imperial expansion was made about Sparta in [Walter Moyle], An essay on the Lacedaemonian government (London, 1698).

For some of the consequences of this concentration on classical history, see J.W.Johnson, The formation of English neo-classical thought (Princeton, 1967), especially pp.46-55.

private lusts. Davenant attributed the destruction of the state to Mark Antony, "whose luxury alone was sufficient to impoverish many rich nations"; to Nero, who wasted resources to service his addiction to pleasure; to Caracalla, who robbed the Treasury to "feed the licentious appetites" of his followers; to Macrinus who "could not avoid plunging himself into the voluptuous courses of his predecessor" and to Heliogabalus who "exceeded all that went before him in rapine, cruelty and riot".<sup>162</sup> Ultimately, therefore, the cause of Roman decline was an ethical collapse at the centre, leading to degeneration throughout the state.

When Countries are effeminated by Luxury, and impoverish'd by Riot and ill Conduct, that is, when they have neither Virtue nor Strength remaining, they presently become a Prey to the Warlike Nations that will invade them.<sup>163</sup>

The survival of moralism as a pillar of country thought helped to preserve the other great support of the pre-Ryswick worldview: the belief that the Restoration regimes was the source of most miscarriages. Whilst the "sociological" bent of late 1690s discourse pushed writers to examine forces operating outside the period 1660-1688, their lingering moral sense attracted them back to that notoriously vicious period. They continued to see Charles and James' courts as the entry point for the debaucheries which still plagued the nation. For instance, in the work of John Trenchard, the leading anti-army polemicist, the executive itch for a standing force was traced back to the luxuries of the Caroline household. The idea of a large, professional soldiery was conceived in a court whose manners had been corrupted by popery, and which had consequently aimed at arbitrary power to satisfy its appetites. Charles II was a "luxurious effeminate prince" who

debauched and enervated the whole Kingdom: His court was a Scene of Adulteries, Drunkenness, and Irreligion, appearing more like Stews, or the Feasts of Bacchus, than the Family of a Chief Magistrate: And in a little time the Contagion

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<sup>162</sup> Charles Davenant, A discourse of grants and resumptions (London, 1700), pp.56, 60-2, 72, 78, 79.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid. p.77.



spread thro' the whole Nation, that it was out of fashion not to be Leud.<sup>164</sup>

The junto were, therefore, merely continuing the traditions of Caroline and Jacobite ministries.<sup>165</sup> Other pamphleteers painted similar pictures of the Restoration regimes. Although Davenant's Tom Double was a product of post-revolutionary times, his creator stressed that Charles' reign had also seen a vicious class of men reliant upon a corrupt executive.

Many of 'em were debauch'd by Pomp and Splendour, and in the Heat of their Youth, they lik'd the Pleasures of a Court, but the Riots of it compell'd many of 'em, at last, to depend upon its Favours.<sup>166</sup>

Other country pamphleteers joined the chorus. One spoke of

that Inundation of Profaness, Leudness and Immorality, introduc'd by K.Charles II, and his Atheistical Wits, to fit the Nation for the intended Yoke of Popery and Slavery.<sup>167</sup>

John Toland saw the Church, politics, judiciary and above all, morals "debauched ... by the pattern showed us at court" under Kings corrupted by the Roman faith.<sup>168</sup>

This echo of the pre-Ryswick world view in later country ideology was vitally important for William's propagandists. It meant that their old language could preserve its role. Whilst the vice of the Restoration regimes was still perceived as a problem, the courtly reformation campaign to purge it out might still be seen as relevant by country politicians. It might continue to knit court and country together even in the difficult conditions of the late decade.

The winter of 1697-8 provided a fine instance of a successful application of reformation propaganda after the war. It has been mentioned that William opened Parliament in 1697 with an appeal for moral renewal. What has not been fully explored is the way his speech

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<sup>164</sup> [John Trenchard], A short history of standing armies in England (London, 1698), p.10-11

<sup>165</sup> [John Trenchard], A letter from the author of the argument against a standing army, (London, 1697), p.14, made this point explicitly.

<sup>166</sup> [Davenant], Essay on the probable methods, p.237

<sup>167</sup> Considerations on the nature of Parliaments, p.3.

<sup>168</sup> [Toland], The art of governing, pp.8-10.

was received by MPs. On the 7th February, 1698, Sir John Phillips, a member with engrained country attitudes, rose to remind the House of the King's appeal, and to suggest it address William for a proclamation to reform manners.<sup>169</sup> After an extended debate, in which MPs discussed the threats to the ethical health of the nation, the Commons unanimously agreed to Phillips' proposal. What is interesting about the address which followed was that, like Phillips' original speech, it presented the initiative for action as royal. By talking of "the late gracious declaration your Majesty has made to us from the throne", the House accepted William as its leader in this area, and so preserved that alliance in reformation which had marked the years before Ryswick.<sup>170</sup> When the King responded, this sense of shared purpose was again underlined, as the proclamation thanked the legislature for its interest in moral renewal.<sup>171</sup> William's initial speech to Parliament had thus led to a symbolic statement of unity between crown and legislature, which embraced even the most country-minded MPs. This was a particularly valuable coup at this time, because it was achieved when a majority of the Commons was developing its angry critique of William's army. Courtly reformation, therefore, had continued to balance political tension over some issues, with co-operation on moral reform.

The King's speech in 1697 also used the continuing parallels between courtly reformation and country thought to revivify the ideal of the country court. William's precise words in promoting further reformation were

I esteem it one of the great Advantages of the Peace, that I shall now have Leisure to rectify such Corruptions and Abuses as may have crept into any Part of the Administration during the War, and effectually to discourage Profaness and Immorality.<sup>172</sup>

This was an extremely clever statement. In the first place, it kicked into touch the feeling that many of England's troubles stemmed from the period after the Revolution. It admitted that mistakes might have been

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<sup>169</sup> Public Records Office Ms. SP 32 9 ff.194-5.

<sup>170</sup> Journals ... House of Commons, vol.12, p.102-3.

<sup>171</sup> William III, By the King, a proclamation ... 24 February, 1697.

<sup>172</sup> Journals ... House of Lords, vol.16, p.175.

made after 1688, but explained that this was the result of William not having been in the country to prevent them happening. Secondly, and more significantly, the royal speech exploited the surviving mental connection between private and public sin. It juxtaposed the two as targets of royal attention, and so attempted to cash in on William's personal righteousness in order to suggest he was still the best hope for a purge of government. Effectively, the speech persisted with courtly reformation language in the belief that it might renew the early-nineties collaboration against administrative corruption.

By and large, the King's skilfully worded invitation was accepted, at least by country pamphleteers. An underlying support for William, and his perceived policies survived into the literature of the late 1690s. Whilst charging that government had gone badly astray during the monarch's Whig captivity, country writers still insisted that the King was fundamentally a virtuous man and an ally. Far from including William in their attacks upon recent ills, they appealed for him to return to his principles and lead his people against their wicked governors.<sup>173</sup>

One of the most sustained treatments of this theme came in Davenant's Discourse of grants and resumptions. Like other country tracts of the late decade this offered a damning account of executive vices sprung up since 1688. It complained bitterly of embezzlement, of the unwarranted elevation of court servants, and of new systems of corruption so vast that large sections of the nation depended upon them.<sup>174</sup> Yet, whilst the pamphlet recognised William's chosen ministers as the cause of the trouble, and the conditions created by his war as its opportunity, it was adamant that the King himself was blameless. The image of a purging monarch persisted, as Davenant reminded his readers how William had thrown out the horrors of the Restoration regime and

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<sup>173</sup> For references still treating the King as the nation's virtuous deliverer, see [Trenchard], Short history ... standing armies, p.46; [Walter Moyle and John Trenchard], The second part of an argument shewing that a standing army is inconsistent with a free government, (London, 1697), pp.22-4; [Charles Davenant], Essays upon I. the balance of power ..., (London, 1701), pp.99. It is worth noting that one of Tom Double's close friends went under the name of "Mr. Kingcheat", [Davenant], True picture, p.64.

<sup>174</sup> [Davenant], Discourse of grants, pp.8-11.



how William had thrown out the horrors of the Restoration regime and subsequently fought against vice and corruption.

At his first coming over he sav'd that Religion which our mean Compliance under former Princes had put in danger. ... All the Good [which we have subsequently received has been] the Effects of his own Wisdom, and his Virtues will at last bear down and Master all our Vices.<sup>175</sup>

Such language, of course, sat ill with complaints of degeneration in the 1690s, but Davenant squared the circle in the way suggested by the King in 1697. He insisted that William had been held back from his true policy of reform by the demands of war, and that all the evil that had been done had been perpetrated in spite of his best efforts. For Davenant, William was a virtuous prince

But as not all Seasons are not proper for Physick, so all Times are not fit for purging the Body Politick; Times of Action and War are not so convenient for such Councils as tend to correct Abuses in the State. Perhaps, during the late War, some Things may have been done in England, which the King, in his high Wisdom, may think necessary to animadvert upon now when He is at leisure from His Business in the Field.<sup>176</sup>

Now that peace had come the King would embark on a campaign against these miscarriages, in which all honest men could join.

No doubt when He goes upon so good a Work, He will be assisted by all the best Men of all Parties, and by the whole Body of His People.<sup>177</sup>

Thus the writer who had done most to develop and popularise the late-decade description of government vice, also continued to promote the ideal of the country court. Even after the battles and tensions of the King's last years, the image of a reforming monarch still channelled and moderated criticism. Country ideology may have been re-structured after Ryswick, but the fundamental fears behind it had not altered, and it remained confined within the parameters set for it by a powerful official propaganda. So long as Englishmen were transfixed by horror of private sin and the Restoration regimes, they warmed to a man who claimed to put their anxieties to rest.

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<sup>175</sup> Ibid. p.21.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid. pp.40-1.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid. p.41.

## Conclusion

### The significance of courtly reformation studies

On the 11th March, 1702, only nine weeks after William had addressed Parliament for the last time, Queen Anne delivered her first speech to the legislature. As a royal propagandist, the new ruler enjoyed substantial advantages over her predecessor. She was a direct heir of James II, had been brought up in England, and had been a lifelong member of the Anglican Church. She therefore possessed all the traditional qualifications for British monarchy which her brother-in-law had lacked. At Westminster on the 11th March, she made the most of her assets. In one passage of her speech, Anne tacitly alluded to the difference between her own nationality and that of William, and so hinted that court polemic might now be organised around new themes. She stated

as I know My own Heart to be entirely English, I can very sincerely assure you, there is not any Thing you can expect, or desire of Me, which I shall not be ready to do for the Happiness and Prosperity of England.<sup>1</sup>

Yet, although some of the old King's closest supporters were shocked by these words, it soon became clear that Anne would not introduce a novel court ideology.<sup>2</sup> The very address which appeared to reflect upon William's foreignness, also expressed deep regret at his demise, and promised no change in his policy of opposition to France.<sup>3</sup> In the years which followed, the incoming regime adopted the central tenets of Williamite rhetoric and put them to very similar purposes. Anne would, like William, pose as the sponsor of reformation in her speeches and proclamations, and would use a message of national righteousness to unite the country behind her rule.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Journals ... House of Lords, vol.17, p.68.

<sup>2</sup> For mention of the unfavourable construction of these words, see Gregg, Queen Anne, pp.152-3.

<sup>3</sup> Journals ... House of Lords, vol.17, p.68.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, *ibid.*, vol.19, p.145 - Queen's speech to Parliament, 5th April, 1710; Queen Anne, By the Queen, a proclamation for the encouragement of piety and virtue ... given 6 March 1702, (London, 1702).

It would be interesting to pursue the language of renewal into the new reign, and examine its use in the changing political circumstances of the early eighteenth century. However, this study will conclude with a brief assessment of the historiographic significance of court ideology in the 1690s. What new questions and areas of inquiry are opened up by the elucidation of courtly reformation?

Paradoxically, the true significance of William's polemic appears to lie in its contribution to the historiographies which originally hampered its exploration. In the Introduction to this work, it was argued that study of Orange propaganda had been discouraged by scholarly obsession with a rather restricted range of problems. The chapters which followed demonstrated the advantage of going beyond these limited agenda. They showed that widening interest beyond such topics such as English fundamental law, or Renaissance republicanism, allowed appreciation of a neglected polemic which was used by the post-revolutionary regime to ease its political difficulties. At the end of the process, however, it becomes clear that the most significant result of transcending old historiographies has been to enrich them. The unearthing of courtly reformation seems, ironically, to have its most exciting implications for students of the constitution; of party politics; of Pocock's civic humanism; and of the changing role of religion in political debate after 1660.

At first sight, it might not appear that courtly reformation has much to contribute to constitutional studies. As has been repeatedly stressed, William polemic was a deliberately non-constitutional language, which avoided detailed discussion of the English system of government. Nevertheless, the rhetoric does provide some food for thought for those interested in fundamental law. Whilst Williamite language may not have explored the English constitution in depth, it certainly encouraged particular attitudes to basic English institutions. Most importantly, court propaganda in the 1690s contained a novel sense that mere inheritance was insufficient claim for holding the English throne. Within the polemic, William's right to his position came not from his birth, but from his faith. His willingness to obey God, his zeal in defending Protestantism, and the marks of divine favour these elicited, were shown to have over-ruled James' hereditary legitimacy.



Study of courtly reformation may, therefore, set a new agenda for students of fundamental law. If Williamite polemic convinced the English that tenure of their throne was conditional upon the promotion of godly religion, then this would be an important constitutional innovation, and probably the most significant result of the Revolution.<sup>5</sup> Scholars should certainly investigate this possibility. They should, perhaps, transfer their efforts from detailing limitations of the prerogative in 1688; and the significance of the throne's vacancy; to tracing the new spiritual duties and expectations placed upon the King. Such a transfer may not only help historians gain a clearer understanding of late Stuart monarchy, but may also shed light on the constitutional battles of the Georgian period. In the late-eighteenth, and early-nineteenth centuries, constitutional difficulties were caused when Kings opposed Catholic Emancipation. As George III and George IV did this, they argued that their office had inviolable duties towards the Protestant religion.<sup>6</sup> Their understanding of monarchy had, in part, been created by Burnet and his allies in the 1690s when they had argued that upholding true godliness was the prime function of an English ruler.

Courtly reformation's potential contribution to party studies lies in its ability to address a major problem in the field. In the late 1690s, when the importance of Whig/Tory division after the Exclusion Crisis was being re-asserted, a difficulty arose with the emerging image of a fractured society. As historians realised how factionalised Englishmen in the late Stuart era were, it became increasingly hard to understand how the political system had held together. Although it was agreed that deep hatreds had split the Augustan nation, it was equally obvious that a repeat of the Civil War had been avoided, and that party struggle had become steadily less violent after its bloody beginnings in the early 1680s. Various scholars did attempt to account for this

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<sup>5</sup> Henry Horwitz, "1689 (and all that)", argues that the religious parts of the Revolution settlement - the clauses of the Bill of Rights that prevented Catholics inheriting the throne - were in many ways the most innovatory and significant.

<sup>6</sup> See John Brooke, King George III, (London, 1972), pp.366-8; Asa Briggs, The Age of Improvement, (London, 1959), pp.198-9, 232. Both monarchs cited the coronation oath, composed in 1689, as their reason for not consenting to Emancipation.

curious stability within strife, but their explanations worked at very different levels, and it soon became clear that no single factor could be shown to lie behind the cohesion of English society. Whilst J.H.Plumb concentrated upon Walpole's personal skill in containing and suppressing faction, Geoffrey Holmes emphasised unifying social and economic trends, and Linda Colley pointed to structural limitations on political conflict.<sup>7</sup>

In this area of study, examination of courtly reformation may help by offering more explanations for late Stuart stability. By pointing out that the court was actively engaged in wooing both Whigs and Tories in the 1690s, study of Williamite polemic suggests that the monarchy may have played a significant role in moderating factional struggle. At another level, examination of courtly reformation might question the depth of the ideological rift between the two parties. Above, it was demonstrated that both Whig and Tory constituencies were attracted to the royal campaign of Protestant renewal, and could incorporate its slogans into their own rhetoric.<sup>8</sup> This suggests that there may have been a consensus underlying the two parties' positions, which prevented them drifting dangerously far apart. It may have been that both Whigs and Tories saw their world in fundamentally "Burnetian" terms (understanding it in as a struggle between debauched popery and an English Zion), and disagreed only on how to identify and interpret the parties to this struggle in complex political situations.<sup>9</sup> If this is the case, then study of courtly reformation may aid understanding of party by encouraging investigation of the agreement which lay behind superficially divisive rhetorics.

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<sup>7</sup> Plumb, Growth of political stability, chapter 6; Geoffrey Holmes, "The achievement of stability: the social context of politics from the 1680s to the age of Walpole", in John Cannon ed., The Whig ascendancy: colloquies on Hanoverian England, (London, 1981), pp.1-23; Colley, In defiance of oligarchy, pp.10-23.

<sup>8</sup> See above, chapter 5, section VI.

<sup>9</sup> Jonathan Scott has made a similar point about parties in the Exclusion Crisis. He has suggested that Tories and Whigs in the 1680s were the same people at different stages of political experience. See Scott, Algernon Sidney ... Restoration crisis, pp.21-25.

Courtly reformation may also enrich the study of civic humanism. In the works in which Pocock first delineated his republican discourse, it appeared curiously isolated. Not only was "neo-Harringtonianism" assumed to have become the dominant English discourse after its invention in the 1670s, it was also presented as strangely immune to outside influences. Although Pocock recognised that civic humanism had changed over time, his description of its adaptations relied heavily on internal modification. For him, alterations in the discourse were made by rearranging and reinterpreting the elements of the original language.<sup>10</sup> As a result, neo-Harringtonianism achieved a lonely monopoly in Pocock's account of Augustan England. The discourse was presented as virtually the only means by which late Stuart Englishmen make sense of their situation, and contemporary intellectual debate was reduced to an endless shuffling of its terms.<sup>11</sup>

Study of courtly reformation may rescue civic humanism from this isolation. If it is recognised that Williamite reformation presented a powerful alternative to Pocock's rhetoric in the 1690s, then humanism need no longer be studied as an autonomous entity. It should be explored as it reacted to other discourses, and perhaps, as it incorporated elements of them. For instance, acknowledgement of courtly reformation seems to call for a stimulating re-assessment of Tory/country polemic in the late 1690s. In the first place, the connections which have been traced between Orange ideology and country politics at the end of

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<sup>10</sup> Pocock does recognise intellectual influences from outside his civic humanist rhetoric, particularly the ideal of an ancient constitution, see Pocock, Ancient constitution; and competing providential and customary paradigms – the theme of the early sections of Pocock, Machiavellian moment. See also his recognition of natural jurisprudence as a possible discourse in the mid-eighteenth century in J.G.A. Pocock, "Cambridge paradigms and Scotch philosophers: a study of the relation between the civic humanist and civil jurisprudential interpretation of eighteenth-century social thought" in Istvan Hont and Michael Ignatieff eds, Wealth and virtue: the shaping of political economy in the Scottish Enlightenment, (Cambridge, 1983), pp.209-228. However, Pocock does suggest that other languages, particularly millenarianism, faded out after 1660, and only really traces a narrow set of civic humanist idioms across through the late Stuart period. See for example, Pocock, "Machiavelli, Harrington", Pocock, Political works ... Harrington, and Pocock, Machiavellian moment.

<sup>11</sup> This is a particular fault with Pocock, Machiavellian moment, pp.423-61, which interprets both court and opposition supporters from 1697 as trapped in the same discourse.



William's reign suggest that opposition arguments cannot be understood simply as an internal modification of humanism.<sup>12</sup> Rather, they imply, the language of Toland and Davenant was a hybrid. This was a discourse which combined notions of renaissance republicanism, with Burnet's ideals of the godly nation, and his providential interpretation of history. If this were recognised, it would deepen understanding of the polemic by allowing it to be studied as a complex interweaving of discourses. It would also enrich the work of scholars who have already begun to analyze civic humanism's entanglements with other languages - especially idioms of natural rights.<sup>13</sup>

Secondly, it is possible that a new account of the origins of Tory/country polemic could be formulated after study of government polemic. Pocock explained the emergence of late-decade neo-Harringtonianism as a republican response to the new world of public credit.<sup>14</sup> However, it may also have been a reaction to the success of courtly reformation. It is conceivable that men such as Toland and Davenant were drawn to their secular and sociological explanation of corruption, because older, religious languages of opposition had been made unavailable by Burnet's campaign. In the 1670s, men had explained executive ambition with reference to popery at court. Country-minded politicians had interpreted the problems of their day as manifestations of debauched Catholicism, and had called for national campaigns of godliness to halt the degeneration.<sup>15</sup> Twenty years later, this explanation of government evil was much less tenable. Royal

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<sup>12</sup> For the connections, see above, chapter 6.

<sup>13</sup> For some of this work, which has concentrated on the eighteenth century, see, Ronald Hamowy, "Cato's Letters and the republican paradigm", History of Political Thought, 11 (1990); Issac Kramnick, "Republican revisionism revisited", American Historical Review, 87 (1982), pp.629-664.

<sup>14</sup> See, for example, Pocock, Machiavellian moment, pp.424-6.

<sup>15</sup> For evidence of this mindset, consider the parliamentary response to the Cabal; James' Catholic marriage in 1673; Danby's ministry; and the Popish Plot. Each was met with waves of addresses asking the King to control popery, impeachments which insisted ministers were popishly affected, and calls for fasts to protect the nation. See Journals ... House of Commons, vol.9, pp.291, 292, 293, 562; Cobbett, Parliamentary history, vol.4, cols. 559, 603, 625, 630, 684, 846, 1022, 1037, 1050.

propagandists were busy proving that William's regime was unimpeachably godly, and had taken up old anti-court weapons, such as calls for reforming fasts, to promote the executive's cause.<sup>16</sup> The Tory/country rhetoric of the late 1690s may therefore have arisen because government had appropriated traditional opposition discourse. Once anti-papery and fear of moral degeneration were court polemics, it is possible that critics of the administration felt the need for new languages in which to express their disquiet. This theory should be tested by a detailed examination of anti-court arguments in the late Stuart period. If any evidence can be unearthed to substantiate it, the suggestion might provide insight into one of the most interesting questions facing students of political thought in the early modern England. It might help to explain how political debate, which had been dominated by the biblical languages in the seventeenth century, came to centre on discussion of luxury, (a concept much in vogue amongst Davenant, Toland and their collaborators), in the next hundred years.<sup>17</sup>

Finally, the elucidation of courtly reformation may contribute to the study of the ideological role of religion after the Restoration. In the Introduction, it was noted that the traditional, "secular", view of political debates after 1660 has come under attack. Throughout this thesis, recent works have been cited, which have acknowledged the influence of theology on late Stuart discourse and action. However, whilst this revisionism is welcome, it has suffered from one major difficulty. Valuable studies, which have tried to trace the subtleties of religious politics after 1660, have been overshadowed by the somewhat polemical approach of J.C.D.Clark. In his agenda-setting, and hugely influential, English Society, 1688-1832, Clark skated over many of the ambiguities of faith being discovered by historians of the "long eighteenth century", and yoked the emerging importance of religion to

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<sup>16</sup> For the use of fasts in 1674 and 1678 as gestures of opposition to popish corruption in government, see Haley, First Earl of Shaftesbury, p.356; Jones, First Whigs, p.24.

<sup>17</sup> For comment on the dominance of luxury as a political and social discourse in the eighteenth century, see Langford, Polite and commercial, pp.3-4. For explorations of its use, see John Sekora, Luxury: the concept in Western thought from Eden to Smollett, (Baltimore, 1977).

support a rather simple interpretation of the period.<sup>18</sup> Wanting to reduce late Stuart and early Hanoverian England to an "ancien regime", he claimed that mainstream Protestantism had had an overwhelmingly conservative influence between the Restoration and the Great Reform Act. In Clark's writing, orthodox theology was presented as an uncomplicated buttress of an old social and political order. In particular, Anglicanism, the faith of the vast majority of Englishmen, was unequivocally presented as an ideology of traditional obedience, hierarchy and deference.<sup>19</sup>

In this context, courtly reformation might enrich historical studies by challenging Clark's interpretation. It may help to open up the field of religious politics, by proving that orthodox Christianity was not always a shield for the traditional order. In the 1690s, Burnet recruited the traditional ideology, and the machinery of the Anglican Church, for a propaganda campaign which, in some ways, challenged the status quo. It not only attempted to legitimate a political revolution, it also endorsed processes and attitudes which placed considerable demands on the established social order.

A case in point is England's conversion into a Great Power. In 1987, Joanna Innes suggested that Clark's presentation of an ancien regime was flawed because he saw this construct as static. In fact, Innes pointed out, European historians used the term ancien regime to describe highly dynamic societies, which were transforming themselves in order to mount great military campaigns.<sup>20</sup> A few years later, John Brewer provided an analysis of eighteenth century England as such an emergent Great Power. He demonstrated that a developing "fiscal/military" state had created new loci of authority and influence,

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<sup>18</sup> J.C.D.Clark, English society, 1688-1832, (Cambridge, 1985).

<sup>19</sup> Chapters 2 and 3 of Clark's work presented Anglicanism as the most important single bulwark of divine right dynasticism, and aristocratic values in society. The rest of the book stressed that political and social radicalism was always rooted in dissent and heterodoxy, and describes the conservative forces of order rallying to protect the Church.

<sup>20</sup> Joanna Innes, "Jonathan Clark, social history and England's ancien regime", Past and Present, 115 (1987), pp.165-200, especially pp.198-9.



to which traditional society had had to adapt.<sup>21</sup> Landed elites had suffered heavy taxation; new financial, industrial and commercial interests had risen with the government's infrastructural power; and new groups of public servants had jostled for social position.<sup>22</sup>

Courtly reformation comes into this story because it was a major factor in the rise of Brewer's state. Although there were obviously many stimulants to England's fiscal/military expansion, the propaganda of the bishops in the 1690s surely played an important part - at least at an ideological level. At a time when William was demanding that England gear herself up for massive warfare, Burnet and his allies propagated an outward-looking philosophy, which insisted that the English had vital interests and duties abroad. Courtly reformers encouraged William's subjects to see themselves as part of a great European crusade for God's cause, and helped to convince them to make their massive and transforming attempt to crush Louis XIV.<sup>23</sup> In this instance, therefore, the orthodox Protestantism expounded by the established Church took anything but the role assigned to it by Clark. Far from buttressing an ordered and hierarchical society, it encouraged a military effort which placed that society under great strain. Study of courtly reformation thus demonstrates that Clark missed the potentially disruptive European dimension of his hegemonic Christianity.

A second example of a challenge by English Protestantism to Clark's traditional order came through courtly reformation's potential for social criticism. In Clark's vision, England in the eighteenth century was an unproblematically aristocratic nation. It was a realm in which a self-conscious, landed elite maintained its position through its ideology of paternalism and hereditary privilege. No other group in society gained the confidence or self-awareness to challenge this state

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<sup>21</sup> Brewer, Sinews of power.

<sup>22</sup> For further discussion of social changes and social pressures caused by these processes, see H.J. Habakkuk, "The rise and fall of English landed families, 1600-1800, II", Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 30 (1980), pp.199-221; Geoffrey Holmes, Augustan England: professions, state and society, 1680-1730, (London, 1982), pp.237-287.

<sup>23</sup> See above, chapter 4.

of affairs, and most Englishmen retained an unquestioning faith in hierarchy.<sup>24</sup> The Church was seen underpinning this aristocratic domination by denouncing all forms of insubordination.

There is obviously something in Clark's view. There was a cult of deference in late Stuart and Hanoverian England, and the landed classes were very successful in retaining their elevated status.<sup>25</sup> However, study of courtly reformation shows that the Church's role in this achievement may have been equivocal. Above, it was stressed that the ideology promoted by clerics in the 1690s may have shifted attitudes towards the monarchy from awe for its hereditary powers, to expectations of its moral duties. Here, it appears that the rhetoric may have subjected the aristocracy and gentry to a similar process. Within the bishops' polemic, no Englishman was entitled to respect unless he played his part in the struggle for righteousness. The propagandists stressed that all must contribute to reformation in their particular social station, and paid special attention to the most elevated, stressing that these people had particular responsibilities because of their power and example.<sup>26</sup> Of itself, such stress upon the duty of elites was not subversive. The bishops believed in the inviolability of the social order and emphasised that the impulse for reformation must flow from the

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<sup>24</sup> Clark, English society, pp.42-118.

<sup>25</sup> See, John Cannon, Aristocratic century: the peerage of eighteenth-century England, (Cambridge, 1984); Lawrence Stone and Jeanne C. Fawtier Stone, An open elite? England 1540-1880, (Oxford, 1984). The essays in E.P.Thompson, Customs in common, (London, 1991) outline plebian challenges to the landed classes in the eighteenth century, but nonetheless recognise the elite's cultural hegemony, and the limits to action from below.

<sup>26</sup> The duties of elites was a repeated theme of reforming literature. To take just one example, Lloyd, Sermon ... Lords ... 30th January, 1696/7, pp.29-30, stressed that all must do their part reforming themselves "and those that are under" them, and told the aristocracy assembled in the House of Lords that they, "above all others", ought to consider the moral state of the nation.

top of society downwards.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, Williamite rhetoric did suggest a potential for social criticism which might be uncomfortable for elite groups. Gerald Newman and Linda Colley, working on the late eighteenth century, have shown how "moral" discourses could put England's aristocracy under pressure. Newman charted the rise of an English "nationalism" in the 1750s which criticised a degenerate elite for its Frenchified corruption; whilst Colley argued that nobles during the Napoleonic wars reacted to attacks by toning down their extravagance and advertising their patriotic service to the public.<sup>28</sup> The study of courtly reformation may show that similar processes were occurring a century earlier. Williamite propagandists were prepared to denounce elites for laxity; their equation of patriotism with virtue was as aggressive as that of Newman's "nationalists"; and their encouragement to nobles to repackage themselves as upstanding leaders of society appears similar to calls Colley discovered in the 1790s.<sup>29</sup> Clark, therefore, underplayed the possibility that his established, orthodox Protestantism could test and judge the social hierarchy. In the 1690s, through the idioms of courtly reformation, leading Anglicans outlined an ideal aristocracy, whose claim to status rested as much on their righteous godliness, as their inherited position.

It is through such questioning of J.C.D.Clark's assumptions that study of Williamite propaganda might make its most important

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<sup>27</sup> A tendency to soft-peddle descriptions of aristocratic vice in order to preserve social decorum is noted in Craig, "Reformation of manners", p.200-6. Courtly reformers also stressed that God had ordered society, so that open railing against hierarchy would be sinful. See, Fowler, Discourse of the great disingenuity, pp.95-9; John Sharp, The portraiture of a truly religious man: ... set forth in a sermon preached at Sheffield in Yorkshire, May 14th, 1693, (London, [1693]), p.7.

<sup>28</sup> Gerald Newman, The rise of English nationalism, (New York, 1987); Linda Colley, Britons, pp.164-194.

<sup>29</sup> Courtly reformers denounced the magistrate class when it was negligent, see above, pp.126-8 and Tillotson, Sermon ... Whitehall ... Sept 16, 1691, p.17. Their attacks on the Restoration aristocracy and gentry also showed their ability to criticise sinful elites, see for example, Lloyd, Sermon ... Whitehall ... March the twelfth, 1689/90, p.28. For their equation of reformation and patriotism, see above, pp. . An attempt to encourage the elite to repackage itself can perhaps be seen in the royal proclamations against vice, which insisted that virtue would, henceforth, be a qualification for court and government preferment.



contribution to early modern historiography. By demonstrating the problems with this historian's account of an English ancien regime, examination of courtly reformation may help to end the rather sterile argument which has come to dominate discussion of the period his book covered. Since the publication of English Society in 1985, a number of historians have expressed concern that historical investigations have got trapped in argument about its hypothesis. Scholars such as Joanna Innes and William Speck, have complained that attempts to demonstrate or disprove an ancien regime have polarized their field, and have reduced discussion to a fruitless debate between proponents of change and continuity.<sup>30</sup> One of the most vehement of these historians has been Roy Porter. He has condemned both Clark and his detractors for their methodological rigidity; pointing out that both sides have assumed that traditional order was incompatible with social, political or economic innovation.<sup>31</sup>

Porter has not only criticised other historians, however. He has also suggested a way out of their snare. He has demonstrated that continuity and change frequently re-enforced each other in the eighteenth century. Established elites and institutions often benefitted from the dynamism of English society, and cultural innovations were frequently made within established political and social frames.<sup>32</sup> The study of courtly reformation can, perhaps, make its greatest contribution by complementing this suggestive reconciliation of the old and the new. Whilst Porter shows traditional authorities utilising social and cultural changes: students of courtly reformation could show an innovative regime exploiting very old messages and means of

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<sup>30</sup> Joanna Innes, "Jonathan Clark, social history", criticised the general use of dichotomous modern/pre-modern categories to analyze the past. W.A. Speck, "Will the real eighteenth century stand up?", Historical Journal, 34 (1991), pp.203-6, satirised the two eighteenth centuries on offer in its title, and suggested they were partly optical illusions, caused by looking at different bodies of evidence.

<sup>31</sup> Porter makes this point amongst the endnotes of Jeremy Black ed., British politics and society from Walpole to Pitt, 1742-1789, (London, 1990), pp.237-9.

<sup>32</sup> See Roy Porter, "English society in the eighteenth century revisited", in Black, British politics ... Walpole to Pitt, pp.29-52, especially pp.29-38.

propaganda. In the 1690s the government turned to the established Church, and the traditional idioms of English Protestantism, to sell its Revolution and its transforming war against France. As they argued for national renewal after 1688, Burnet and his allies not only helped to secure an Orange prince on the precarious English throne; they also demonstrated the radical potential of Tudor ideals of reformation at the end of the seventeenth century.

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The copy of the association signed at Exeter by the Lords and gentlemen that went to the Prince of Orange, [1688]

The courageous souldiers of the West, [1690]

**Timothy Cruso**

The Churches plea for the divine prescence to prosper humane force in a sermon preached June 5, 1689, being the day appointed for a general fast, (London, 1689)

The excellency of the Protestant faith as its its objects and supports in a sermon preached November 5th, 1689, (London, 1689)

The mighty wonders of a merciful providence in a sermon preached on January 31, 1688, being the day of publick thanksgiving ... Prince of Orange, (London, 1689)

The danger of the Church of England from a general assembly of the covenantors in Scotland, (London, 1690)

**[Charles Davenant]**

A discourse of grants and resumptions (London, 1700)

Discourses on the publick revenues and on the trade of England, (London, 1698)

An essay on the probable methods of making a people gainers in the ballance of trade, (London, 1699)

Essays upon I. the balance of power ..., (London, 1701)

Tom Double return'd out of the country: or the true picture of a modern Whig set forth in a second dialogue between Mr.Whiglove and Mr.Double, (London, 1702)

The true picture of a modern Whig, set forth in a dialogue between Mr.Whiglove and Mr.Double, two under-spur-leathers to the late ministry (London, 1701)

A declaration by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in and about the Cities of London and Westminster assembled at Guildhall, the 11th day of November, 1688, (London, 1688)

The declaration of the nobility, gentry and commonality at the rendezvous at Nottingham, Nov. 22. 1688, ([London], 1689)



A defence of the archbishop's sermon on the death of her late Majesty of blessed memory, (London, 1695)

[Daniel Defoe]

"The legion memorial", in Scott, Collection of scarce and valuable tracts, vol.11, pp.255-9

Reformation of manners: a satyr, ([London], 1702)

[James Drake]

The history of the last Parliament begun at Westminster the tenth day of February, in the twelfth year of the reign of King William (London, 1702)

John Dryden

Cleomenes, the Spartan hero: a tragedy as it is acted at the Theatre Royal, (London, 1692)

Don Sebastian, King of Portugal: a tragedy as acted at the Theatre Royal, (London, 1690)

John Dunton

The life and errors of John Dunton esq., late citizen of London, (London, 1705)

The Dutch design anatomized, or a discovery of the wickedness and injustice of the intended invasion, (London, 1688)

England's crisis: or the world well mended, (London, 1689)

England's enemies exposed and its true friends and patriots defended, (London, 1701)

The expedition of the Prince of Orange for England; giving an account of the most remarkable passages thereof, in Complete collection of papers, part 3, pp.1-8

[John Flavell]

Mount Pisgah: a sermon preached at the publick thanksgiving Febr. 14, 1688/9, (London, 1689)

[Andrew Fletcher]

A discourse concerning militias and standing armies with relation to the past and present governments of Europe and of England in particular, (London, 1697)

A form of prayer and thanksgiving to almighty God for having made His Highness the Prince of Orange the glorious instrument of the great deliverance of the kingdom from popery and arbitrary power, ([London], 1688)

A form of prayer to be used on 5th June coming, being the fast day, (London, 1689)

A form of prayer to be used on Friday the eighth day of April next ... being the fast day, (London, 1692)

A form of prayer, with thanksgiving ... 5th November, (London, 1689)

The form of the proceeding to the funeral of Her late Majesty, Mary II, (London, 1695)

**Edward Fowler**

A discourse of the great disingenuity and unreasonableness of repining at afflicting providences, (London, 1695)

A sermon preached at Bow-Church April the xivth 1690; before the Lord Maior and Court of Aldermen, and citizens of London being the fast day, (London, 1690)

A sermon preached at St Mary le Bow to the societies for reformation of manners, June 26, 1699, (London, 1699)

A sermon preached at the Guildhall ... 7th Sept. 1704 being the day of publick thanksgiving for the late glorious victory obtained over the French, (London, 1704)

A sermon preached before the House of Lords in the Abbey-Church at Westminster, upon Thursday the Sixteenth of April, 1696, (London, 1696)

**[Edward Fowler]**

A vindication of an undertaking of certain gentlemen, in order to the suppressing of debauchery and profaness, (London, 1692)

**John Foxe**

Acts and monuments of these latter and perillous dayes, touching matters of the Church, (London, 1563)

A free conference concerning the present Revolution of affairs in England, (London, 1689)

A full account of King William's royal voyage and safe arrival at the Castle of Belfast in Ireland, (London, 1690)

A full account of the two great victories lately obtained before Limerick by K.William's forces over the French and Irish rebels, (London, 1690)

A further account of the Prince's army, in a letter from Exon. Novemb.24, in Complete collection of papers, part 3, pp.8-9

**James Gardiner**

A sermon preach'd before the House of Lords at the Abbey Church of St Peter's Westminster on Wednesday the 11th December, 1695, being the day appointed for a solemn fast and humiliation, (London, 1695)

The general association, of the gentlemen of Devon, to His Highness, the Prince of Orange, (Exeter, 1688)

Great news from Limerick giving an account of the successful victory over the Irish rebels, (London, 1690)

Great news from Salisbury, (London, 1688)

Thomas Grice

A short vindication of the constitution of the Church of England endeavouring to prevent all future quarrels and protestations, (London, 1689)

[John Hampden]

Some short considerations about the most proper way of raising money in the present conjuncture, (London, 1691)

Some short considerations concerning the state of the nation, [1692]

[Robert Harley]

A letter from the Grecian Coffee House in answer to the Taunton-Dean letter, to which is added a paper of queries sent from Worcester (London, 1701)

The Taunton-Dean letter from E.C. to J.F at the Grecian Coffee House London (London, 1701)

John Hartcliffe

A treatise of the moral and intellectual virtues, (London, 1691)

William Hayley

A sermon preach'd at the church of St. Mary le Bow before the societies for reformation of manners, upon Monday October 3, 1698, (London, 1699)

Edmund Hickergill

The horrid sin of man-catching: explain'd in a sermon upon Jer.5.25.26., (London, 1681)

[George Hickes]

A vindication of some among our selves against the principles of Dr Sherlock, (London, 1692)

An historical account of the memorable actions of the most glorious monarch, William III, (London, 1689)

"An historical account of the present convocation", in [Long], Vox cleri



The history of the most illustrious William, Prince of Orange: deduced from the first founders of the ancient House of Nassau, together with the most considerable actions of this present Prince, (London, 1688)

An honest commoners speech, (London, 1694)

Anthony Horneck

Several sermons on the fifth of St Matthew, 2nd edition (London, 1706)

A sermon preached at Fulham, in the chappel of the palace, upon Easter-day, 1689, at the consecration of the Right Reverend Father in God, Gilbert, Lord bishop of Sarum, (London, 1689)

The true nature of righteousness in a sermon preached before the King and Queen at Whitehall the 17th November, 1689, (London, 1689)

John Howe

A discourse relating to the much-lamented death and solemn funeral of our incomparable and most gracious Queen Mary, of most blessed memory, 2nd edition (London, 1695)

A sermon preach'd on the late day of thanksgiving Decemb. 2 1697, (London, 1698)

James II

By the King, a declaration ... given 6 November, 1688, (London, 1688)

By the King, a proclamation, ... given 29 June 1688, (London, 1688)

By the King, a proclamation ... given 28 September, 1688, (London, 1688)

By the King, a proclamation ... given 20 October, 1688, (London, 1688)

By the King, a proclamation ... given 2 November, 1688, (London, 1688)

By the King, a proclamation for the speedy calling of a Parliament ... given 30 November, 1688, (London, 1688)

By the King, a proclamation to restrain the spreading of false news, ... given 26 October, 1688, (London, 1688)

His Majesties most gracious declaration to all his loving subjects ... given 17 April, 1693, (St.Germains, 1693)

His Majesty's reasons for withdrawing himself from Rochester, (Rochester, 1688)

William Jane

A sermon preached before the King and Queen at Whitehall, in November 1692, (London, 1693)

[William Jane]

A letter to a friend, containing some quearies about the new Commission of making alterations in the liturgy, canons &c of the Church of England, [London, 1689]

[Nathanial Johnston]

The dear bargain; or, a true representation of the state of the English nation under the Dutch, [1689?]

Pierre Jurieu

The accomplishment of scripture prophesies, or the approaching deliverance of the Church, (London, 1687)

Monsieur Jurieu's judgement on the question of defending our religion by arms, with reflections upon the affairs of England, (London, 1689)

A just censure of the answer to "Vox cleri", (London, 1690)

A justification of the proceedings of the ... House of Commons in the last sessions of Parliament, (London, 1701)

Thomas Ken

A letter to Dr. Tenison upon the occasion of a sermon entitled "A sermon preached at the funeral of Queen Mary", (London, [1695])

Richard Kidder

The charge of Richard, Lord bishop of Bath and Wells to the clergy of his diocese at his primary visitation begun at Axebridge June 2 1692, (London, 1693)

The duty of the rich: in a sermon ... Easter Tuesday April 22, 1690, (London, 1690)

"The life of Anthony Horneck", preface to Horneck, Several sermons Of fasting. A sermon preach'd before the Queen at Whitehall on May 23 1694, being the day of publick humiliation, (London, 1694)

John Knight

The speech of Sir John Knight of Bristol, against the bill for a general naturalisation, [London, 1694]

[Charlwood Lawton]

A short state of our condition with relation to the present Parliament, (London, 1693)

The lay man's religion humbly offered as a help to a modest enquiry every man into his own heart, (London, 1690)

A learned speech made at the Town-hall of R---ing, (London, 1701)

[Charles Leslie]

Remarks on some late sermons: and in particular, on Dr Sherlock's sermon at the Temple Dec. 30 1694, (London, 1695)

A letter from a gentleman in Exeter to his friend in London, (London, 1688)

A letter from a gentleman in Yorkshire, to his countryman in London, concerning the Duke of Leeds, with an answer, (London, 1695)

A letter to a member of the committee of grievances, containing some seasonable reflections on the present administration of affairs, since managed by Dutch councils, [1690]

**William Lloyd**

A discourse of God's ways in dispensing of kingdoms, part 1  
(London, 1691)

A sermon preached before Her Majesty on May 29, being the anniversary of the Restoration of the King and royal family, (London, 1692)

A sermon preach'd before the House of Lords, at the Abbey-Church of St. Peter's Westminster, on Saturday the 30th January, 1696/7, (London, 1697)

A sermon preached before the King and Queen at Whitehall, March the twelfth 1689/90 being the fast day, (London, 1690)

A sermon preached before Their Majesties at Whitehall, on the fifth day of November, 1689, (London, 1689)

A sermon preached before the Queen at Whitehall, January 30th, being the day of the martyrdom of King Charles the First, (London, 1691)

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**[Thomas Long]**

The case of persecution charg'd on the Church of England consider'd and discharg'd in order to her justification and a desired union of Protestant dissenters, (London, 1689)

A full answer to all the popular objections that have yet appear'd for not taking the oath of allegiance to their present Majesties, (London, 1689)

The healing attempt examined and submitted to Parliament and Convocation, whether it be healing or hurtful to the peace of the Church (London, 1689)

Vox cleri: or the sense of the clergy concerning making alterations in the established liturgy, (London, 1690)

**M.M.**

Letter from the Member of Parliament, in answer to the letter of the divine, concerning the bill for uniting Protestants, [1689]

**Thomas Manningham**

A sermon preach'd at the parish church of St. Andrews, Holborn the 30th December 1694. On the most lamented death of our most gracious sovereign Queen Mary, 3rd edition (London, 1695)

**Mary II**

Her Majesties gracious letter to the Justices of the Peace in the County of Middlesex July 9 1691 for the suppressing of prophaness and debauchery, (London, 1691)

**[Henry Maurice]**

Remarks from the country; upon the two letters relating to the Convocation and alterations in the liturgy, (London, 1689/90)



## Middlesex Quater Sessions

Mid.ss. Ad. General. Quateral Session [Public order respecting vice and immorality], (London, 1691)

Min Heer T. Van C.'s answer to Min Heer H. van L.'s letter of the 15th March, 1689; representing the true interests of Holland and what they have already gained by our losses, [1689]

The modern fanatical reformer, or the reliqious state tinker, (London, 1693)

[James Montgomery]

Great Britain's just complaint for her late measures, present sufferings and the future miseries she is exposed to, (London, 1692)

Walter Moyle

"An essay on the constitution of the Roman government" [1699], in Robbins, Two English republican tracts

[Walter Moyle]

An essay on the Lacedaemonian government, (London, 1698)

The mystery of phanaticism, or the artifices of the dissenters to support their schism, (London, 1698)

John Ollyffe

England's call to thankfulness for her great deliverance ... in a sermon preach'd in the church of Almer in Dorsetshire on Feb 14 1688/9, (London, 1689)

An order of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons assembled at Westminster in this present Convention for a publick thanksgiving, (London, 1688)

Simon Patrick

Angliae speculum: a glass that flatters not: presented to a country congregation at the late solemn fast, April 24th, 1678, (London, 1678)

The bishop of Ely's letter to the clergy of his diocese, (London, 1692)

A letter of the bishop of Chichester to his clergy, (London, 1690)

A sermon against murmuring preached at St. Paul's Covent-Garden, on the fifth Sunday in Lent, March 17, 1688/9, (London, 1689)

A sermon preach'd at St. Paul's Covent Garden, on the day of fasting and prayer Novemb. 13th, 1678, (London, 1678)

A sermon preached at St. Paul's Covent Garden on 31st January 1688 being the thanksgiving day for the deliverance of the kingdom, (London, 1689)

A sermon preached at St Paul's Covent-Garden, on the first Sunday in Lent; being a second part of the sermon preached before the Prince of Orange, (London, 1689)

A sermon preached before the King and Queen at Whitehall April 16, 1690, being the fast day, (London, 1690)

A sermon preach'd before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in the Abby-church at Westminster, on the 5th November, 1696, (London, 1696)

A sermon preached before the Queen at Whitehall, March 1, 1688/9, (London, 1689)

A sermon preach'd before the Queen at Whitehall, the 8th April 1692, being the fast day appointed to implore God's blessing on Their Majesties persons, (London, 1692)

A sermon preached in the chappel of St James' before His Highness, the Prince of Orange, the 20th January 1688, (London, 1689)

A treatise of repentence and of fasting, especially the Lent fast, 3rd edition (London, 1700)

[Simon Patrick]

A discourse about tradition, (London, 1687)

[Simon Patrick?]

A brief account of the new sect of latitude men, together with some reflections on the new philosophy, (London, 1662)

Edward Pelling

A sermon preached before the King ... December 13th 1691, (London, 1692)

A sermon preached before the King ... October 13th 1695, (London, 1695)

A sermon preached ... before the Queen, March the Sixteenth, 1691, (London, 1692)

The people of England's grievances inquired into, [1693?]

Plain English: or an inquiry into the causes that have frustrated our expectations from the late happy Revolution, (London, 1691)

The poor man's plea, in relation to all the proclamations, declarations, acts of Parliament &c, which have been ... for a reformation of manners, (London, 1698)

A praier for the present expedition, ([Hague], 1688)

Prayers to be used in all Cathedral, collegiate and parochial churches, and chapels, ... during this time of publick apprehension from the danger of invasion, [London, 1688]

The price of the abdication, [1693]

The Prince of Orange his Declaration, shewing the reasons why he invades England, with a short preface, and some modest remarks on it, (London, 1688)

Proposals for a national reformation of manners, humbly offered to the consideration of our magistrates and clergy, (London, 1694)

The puritanical justice: or the beqgars turn'd thieves. A farce as it was late acted about the City of London, (London, 1698)

Reflections upon our late and present proceedings in England, [1689]

A relation from the city of Orange, of a crown of light that there seen in the air, the 6th May, 1688, in Complete collection of papers

Remarks on the present confederacy and late Revolution in England, (London, 1693)

A remonstrance and protestation of all the good Protestants of this kingdom, against deposing their lawful sovereign, King James II, (London, 1689)

The royal flight, or the conquest of Ireland, (London, 1690)

The royal voyage, or the Irish expedition, (London, 1690)

George Royse

A sermon preached before the King at Belfast on 14th day of June 1690, (London, 1691)

The sad estate of the kingdom, [1690]

Nicholas Sanders

De origine ac progressu schmatis Anglicani liber, (Rome, 1586)

Histoire du schisme d'Angleterre ... mis en Francois par Monsieur Mancroix, (Paris, 1676)

John Scott

A sermon preached at Fulham on Sunday Oct.13, 1689 at the consecration of ... Edward, Lord bishop of Worcester, Simon, Lord bishop of Chichester, (London, 1689)

Charles Sedley

The poetical works of the honourable Sir Charles Sedley, baronet, and his speeches in Parliament (London, 1707)

The speech of Sir Charles Sidley in the House of Commons (London, 1691)

John Sharp

The portraiture of a truly religious man: ... set forth in a sermon preached at Sheffield in Yorkshire, May 14th, 1693, (London, [1693])



A sermon about the government of the thoughts preach'd before the King and Queen at Whitehall the 4th March ... 1693/4, (London, 1694)

A sermon preached before the Honourable House of Commons at St Margaret's Westminster, Wednesday 21 May, 1690 being the day of the monthly-fast, (London, 1690)

A sermon preach'd before the King and Queen at Whitehall, the 12th Nov 1693, being the day appointed for a publick thanksgiving, (London, 1693)

A sermon preached before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled in the Abbey-church at Westminster, on the fifth of November, 1691, (London, 1691)

A sermon preached on the day of the publick fast, April 11th, 1679 at St. Margaret's Westminster, before the Honourable House of Commons, (London, 1679)

A sermon preached on 28th June at St.Giles in the Fields ... at his leaving the parish, (London, 1691)

To the reverend clergy of the diocese of York, (London, 1699)

#### William Sherlock

The case of allegiance due to sovereign powers, stated and resolved, (London, 1691)

A practical discourse concerning death, (London, 1689)

A short defence of the last Parliament with a word of advice for all electors to the ensuing (London, 1699)

Short reflections upon the state of affairs in England: more especially, with relation to the taxes and contributions now necessary, (London, 1691)

#### John Shower

A sermon preach'd to the societies for reformation of manners in the Cities of London and Westminster ... November 15 1697, (London, 1698)

The soldiers return, or his promise to his country-men perform'd, [1690]

Some reflections upon His Highness the Prince of Orange's Declaration, (Edinburgh, 1688)

A speech to His Highness, the Prince of Orange, by a true Protestant of the Church of England, as established by law, (London, 1689)

#### Thomas Sprat

A discourse made by the Lord bishop of Rochester to the clergy of his diocese at his visitation in the year 1695, (London, 1695)

A sermon preached before the King and Queen at Whitehall on Good Friday 1690, (London 1690)

A sermon preached before the King and Queen at Whitehall on Good Friday April 6 1694, (London, 1694)

A sermon preached to the natives of the County of Dorset residing in and about the Cities of London and Westminster at St Mary le Bow on Dec. 8, 1692, (London, 1693)

**[Edward Stephens]**

An act for the more effectual restraining and suppressing divers and notorious sins, and reformation of manners of the people of this nation, (London, 1689)

An admonition concerning a publick fast, (London, 1691)

An appeal to earth and heaven against the Christian Epicureans, who have betrayed their King and countrey, (London, 1691)

The beginnings and progress of a needful and hopeful reformation in England, (London, 1691)

A plain relation of the late action at sea, between the English and the Dutch, and the French fleets from June 22 to July 5 Last, (London, 1689)

A specimin of a declaration against debauchery, tendered to the consideration of His Highness, the Prince of Orange, (London, 1688)

**Edward Stillingfleet**

The bishop of Worcester's charge to the clergy of his diocese in his primary visitation, begun at Worcester, Sept 11, 1690, (London, 1691)

Reformation of manners, the true way of honouring God. With the necessity of putting the laws in execution against vice and profaness. In a sermon preach'd at Whitehall, (London, [1709?])

A sermon preach'd before the Queen at Whitehall February 22nd 1688/9, (London, 1689)

A sermon preached on the fast day, November 13th, 1678, at St. Margaret's, Westminster before the Honourable House of Commons, 2nd edition (London, 1678)

**[Edward Stillingfleet]**

The Council of Trent examined and disproved by Catholic tradition, (London, 1687)

**Matthew Sylvester**

Relique Baxterianae: or Mr Richard Baxter's narrative of the most memorable passages of his life and times, (London, 1696)

**William Talbot**

A sermon preached at the Cathedral church of Worcester upon the monthly fast day September 16 1691, (London, 1691)

**Thomas Tenison**

His Grace the Lord archbishop of Canterbury's letter to the Right Reverend the Lords bishops of his province, (London, 1699)

A sermon against self-love &c. preached before the Honourable House of Commons on 5th June 1689 being the fast day, (London, 1689)

A sermon concerning the coelestial body of a Christian, after the resurrection: preached before the King and Queen at Whitehall, April 8 1694, being Easter day, (London, 1694)

A sermon concerning the folly of atheism preached before the Queen at Whitehall, February 22, 1690/1, (London, 1691)

A sermon concerning holy resolution preached before the King at Kensington December 30th, 1694, (London, 1695)

A sermon preached at the funeral of Her late Majesty Queen Mary of ever blessed memory in the Abbey Church in Westminster upon March 5 1694/5, (London, 1695)



[Thomas Tenison]

A Discourse concerning the Ecclesiastical Commission open'd in the Jerusalem-Chamber, October 10th, 1689, (London, 1689)

John Tillotson

The Christian sacrifice, (London, 1671)

The devout Christian instructed how to pray and give thanks to God, (London, 1673)

A persuasive to frequent communion in the holy sacrament of the Lord's supper, (London, 1683)

A sermon preach'd at Lincoln's Inn chappel on 31st January 1688, being the day appointed for a public thanksgiving, (London, 1689)

A sermon preach'd at St. Mary le Bow before the Lord Mayor ... of London on Wed. 18th June, a day appointed by Their Majesties for a solemn monthly fast, (London, 1690)

A sermon preach'd at Whitehall before the Queen on the monthly fast day, Sept. 16, 1691, (London, 1690)

A sermon preached before the Honourable House of Commons on Wednesday 16 April. A day appointed by Their Majesties for a solemn monthly fast, (London, 1690)

A sermon preach'd before the King and Queen at Hampton-Court April 14th 1689, (London, 1689)

A sermon preached before the King and Queen at Whitehall, October 27, being the day appointed for the publick thanksgiving, (London, 1692)

[John Tillotson]

A form of prayers used by his late Majesty K. William III when he received the holy sacrament, (London, 1704)

The hazard of being saved in the Church of Rome, (London, 1686)

To the reverend and merry answerer of "Vox cleri", [1690]

[John Toland]

Christianity not mysterious, (London, 1695)

[John Toland]

The art of governing by parties: particularly in religion, in politics, in Parliament, (London, 1701)

The militia reform'd, or an easy scheme of furnishing England with a constant land force ... without endangering the publick liberty (London, 1697)

[Matthew Traubman]

London's great jubilee, restor'd and perform'd on Tuesday October 29th 1689, (London, 1689)

[John Trenchard]

A letter from a souldier to the Commons of England, occasioned by an address now carrying on by the Protestants in Ireland (London, 1702)

A letter from the author of the argument against a standing army, (London, 1697)

A short history of standing armies in England (London, 1698)



[John Trenchard and Walter Moyle]

An argument shewing that a standing army is inconsistent with a free government (London, 1697)

The second part of an argument shewing that a standing army is inconsistent with a free government, (London, 1697)

A true account of the Prince of Orange's coming to St. James, on Tuesday the 18th of December 1688, about three of the clock in the afternoon, (London, 1688)

A true and exact relation of the Prince of Orange his public entrance into Exeter, ([Exeter], 1688)

A true and faithful account of the present condition of the kingdom of Ireland, (London, 1690)

A true and perfect journal of the affairs in Ireland since His Majesties arrival in the kingdom, (London, 1690)

The true copy of a paper delivered by the Lord De..... to the Mayor of Darby, where he quarter'd the one and twentieth of November, 1688, (London, 1688)

A true copy of the paper delivered to the sheriffs of London and Middlesex by William Anderton, at the place of execution, [London, 1693]

The valiant souldiers misfortune: or His Grace the Duke of Schomberg's last farewell, [1690]

Vox laici: or the laymen's opinion touching the making alterations in our establish'd liturgy, (London, 1689)

William Wake

The authority of Christian princes over their ecclesiastical synods asserted, (London, 1697)

An exhortation to mutual charity and union among Protestants in a sermon preach'd before the King and Queen at Hampton Court, May 21, 1689, (London, 1689)

Of our obligation to put our trust in God rather than in men ... a sermon preached before ... Gray's-Inn, upon the occasion of the death of our late royal sovereign, Queen Mary, (London, 1695)

A sermon preach'd before the Honourable House of Commons at St Margaret's Westminster, June 5th 1689, being the fast day, (London, 1689)

A sermon preach'd before the Lord-Mayor ... on Thursday the 26th November, being the day of the publick thanksgiving, (London, 1691)

A sermon preached in the parish church of St. James Westminster, April xvith, 1696, being the day of thanksgiving, (London, 1696)

[William Wake ed.]

A continuation of the present state of the controversy, (London, 1688)

The present state of the controversy between the Church of England and the Church of Rome, (London, 1687)

Edward Weterhall

A sermon preached at Whitehall, before the Queen, on the fourth Sunday in Lent, March 22, 1690 reflecting on the late sufferings and deliverances of the Protestants in the City and County of Cork, (Cork, 1691)

The Whigs thirty two quearies, and as many of the Tories in answer to them, (London, 1701)

[John Whittell]

An exact diary of the late expedition of his illustrious Highness, the Prince of Orange, (1689)

[John Willes]

The judgement of the foreign reformed Churches concerning the rites and offices of the Church of England shewing there is no need of alteration, (London, 1690)

William III

By the King, a proclamation for a general fast, ... given 18 March 1696/7, (London, 1696/7)

By the King, a proclamation for a publick thanksgiving, ... given 12 March 1696, (London, 1697)

By the King, a proclamation for a publick thanksgiving, ... given 11 November 1697, (London, 1697)

By the king, a proclamation for preventing and punishing immorality and prophaness. ... given 24 Febraury 1697, (London, 1697)

By the King, a proclamation for preventing and punishing immorality and prophaness, ... given 9 December 1699, (London, 1699)

The declaration of His Highness William Henry, Prince of Orange, of the reasons inducing him to appear in armes in the kingdom of England, (Hague, 1688)

His Highness the Prince of Orange his letter to the Lords ... assembled at Westminster in this present Convention, January 22, 1688/9, (London, 1689)

His Majesties gracious message to the Convocation sent by the Earl of Nottingham, (London, 1689)

His Majesties letter to the Lord bishop of London, to be communicated to the two provinces of Canterbury and York, (London, 1689)

His Majesties most gracious speech to both Houses of Parliament, the 16th day of March 1689, (London, 1688)

His Majesties most gracious speech to both Houses of Parliament, the 19th day of October, 1689, (London, 1689)

A Letter, &c. [to the English Army], [1688]

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